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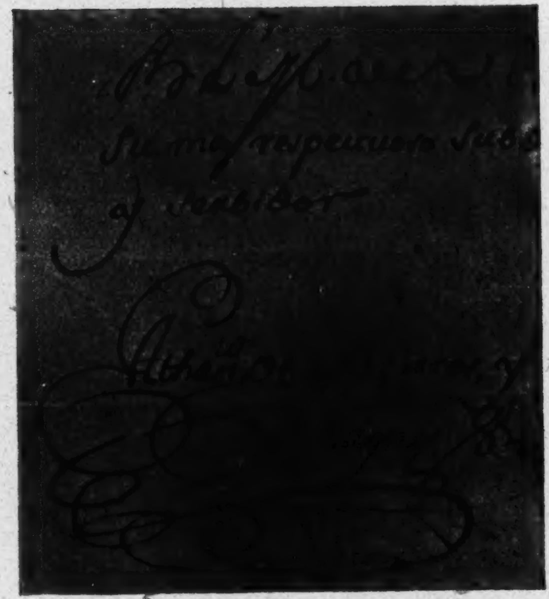
VOLUME II



B. l. M. de V. S.
Su mas respectuoso subd.
y servidor
Athanase de Mezieres

FACSIMILE OF THE SIGNATURE OF ATHANASE DE MÉZIÈRES

ATHANASE DE MÉZIÈRES

AND THE

LOUISIANA-TEXAS FRONTIER

1768-1780

DOCUMENTS PUBLISHED FOR THE FIRST TIME, FROM THE ORIGINAL SPANISH AND FRENCH MANUSCRIPTS, CHIEFLY IN THE ARCHIVES OF MEXICO AND SPAIN; TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH; EDITED AND ANNOTATED, BY

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VOLUME II

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V. INDIAN TROUBLES IN TEXAS, AND THE ATTACK ON DE MEZIERES AND THE BARON DE RIPPERDA, 1772-1774

108. DE LA PENA[1] TO UNZAGA Y AMEZAGA
SEPTEMBER 14, 1772[2]

[2D] SEÑOR GOVERNOR-GENERAL,

My dear Sir: This is to inform your Lordship that I have returned to this post of Natchitoches, after having gone to the missions of Los Ayxes and Nacocodoches to verify with certainty everything which I reported to your Lordship in the first and fourth letters, dated the sixth and the twenty-second of the past month, as I informed you was my intention.[3]

Everything which these letters of mine contain relative to Reverend Father Abad, and other statements which I made concerning him soon thereafter, are of no importance, for they have no foundation, and prove to be merely idle rumors which M. de Mecieres had spread (in addition to the posts with the packages of letters) in order to make known his great doings.

That reverend father came to take back with him the

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[1] As stated in the "Introduction," Joseph de la Peña was made lieutenant-governor ad interim while De Mézières was on his expedition of 1772. His rank in October, 1772, was that of *sub-teniente de infanteria.*

[2] Bancroft Coll., Louisiana.

[3] The editor has not seen the instructions or the correspondence which caused Peña to go on this mission. On August 20, 1772, De Mézières wrote to the governor complaining of the insurbordination of Peña and others, enclosing some correspondence with Peña, and asking to be allowed to retire "from a place where I live oppressed by misfortunes" [Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 81, nos. 498, 499, 500, 501].

Xaranames, called Anamas, who are in our district. They were of his mission, in the neighborhood of which twenty warriors and some women and children have remained. But seeing how far the savages are from assenting to his plans, the father decided to go without them, for he found them very unrepentant, and completely distrusts their actions and words which he saw and heard; and the insecurity of the peace-agreements which these and the rest have recently made (since all remember the former encounters, and again give them as a reason for not being friendly with us, as the reverend father told me), leads him to infer that interest solely induces them to make peace, and that when interest fails they return to their first designs. For this reason they will make it necessary, at each step, to practice with them those urbanities which they assume to be an obligation on our part.

Among these Xaranames there are five leaders, as the Reverend Father Abad told me, who disaffect the whole nation and who oppose keeping the peace with us and prevent the rest from going with the father. This, in view of all they have told him, and of their having driven the soldiers who accompanied him from their village,[4] as well as the fact that they told him that they were going to kill those who had remained in his mission if he did not send them, caused him to decide to return to it to guard against any mishap that might befall it.

This father was by chance in San Antonio when M. Mecieres set out from there for this post, having left La Baya, where he is stationed, for the purpose stated. He therefore came with him to Los Anamas, or [rather to]

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[4] *Vilache*–this French word used in a Spanish document is an interesting example of the mixture of languages which occurred on this Franco-Spanish frontier.

San Pedro,[8] whence, seeing that he made no progress with the savages, he retired to Nacocodoches, where I saw him and talked with him.

The purpose of the Father, as he told it to me, is no other than what I have stated, and what M. de Mecieres has had published is untrue. As to the establishment of a presidio or mission for the nations recently reduced to peace, everything is pure deceit, for neither did the father come to undertake such a thing, nor do the nations agree to settle in the places which M. Mecieres has designated to your Lordship, to say nothing of his having given no orders to carry out what he projected. The only thing that has proved true is that the posts and mails are being directed to the traders who are in the nations, announcing his coming and giving new instructions, retiring some from the trade in which they are occupied and establishing others to the injury of the former.

All of the foregoing relates to the fourth and fifth chapters of the instruction which your Lordship gave me.

The blacksmith La Lima, whom he sent to work in the presidio which was said to be founded in San Pedro, is known not to be in that village; he went instead on private business to the Tavoiages Guachita, where he placed Dugene.

I learn through the Reverend Father Fray Ygnacio, of Nacocodoches, that when the five soldiers who set out from Los Adays with secret orders were half a league from the presidio they opened the parcel of letters, and that some went to San Antonio and others to the nations, but what the letters contained is not known.

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[8] "Los Anamas – ô S^{n} Pedro." This does not mean that the two names were synonymous, for as De Mézières tells us, he accompanied Father Abad to San Pedro and then sent his lieutenant the rest of the way, that is to the Tawakoni.

On the twenty-seventh of last month I found in Los Ayxs the militiaman of this post called Grape, who had returned from delivering a parcel from M. de Mecieres to Captain Vigotes, and since the latter cannot read, the bearer himself explained it to him in his language. Through it De Mezieres orders Vigotes to set out with his nation to join with the rest of the friendly tribes to go to war upon the Apaches. I do not know what orders M. de Mecieres may have had from your Lordship for this measure, or what power the governor of the province of Texas may have given him to set in motion the nations under his command. But I think that the unfortunate accidents which will result in the future, if war ensues, will be very prejudicial to the people of San Antonio and to those who travel over the trails, since the Apache nation has a large number of warriors, and since when they learn that their being pursued by all these nations which he invokes against them is due to our influence, they will fall upon San Antonio and the surrounding country more boldly. Since the case has come up, I set forth this consideration, but I go no further on account of not knowing the facts.

As Vigotes has always laughed at the orders of M. Mecieres, whom he gives the epithet of "man of two words," which means to say and not do, I have no doubt he will do the same at present, since he thinks more deeply than some suppose.

M. de Mecieres might have known, like everybody who witnessed the royal treaties, and have declared the intentions of those in question who recently came, because they were called, to make peace, and not have affirmed what he could not know, since the principal chiefs did not come and were not present at this act.

The fathers, Don Joseph Gonzales, and the witnesses, assured me that these parties laughed, at the time of the burial of the hatchet and of the other ceremonies, from which one may infer much. This matter relates to the seventh chapter of your Lordship's instruction.

This is all that I have to report to your Lordship with regard to the affairs with which I am charged by you as well as other matters. Everything reported in the said first and fourth letters is what took place and came to my notice.

May God preserve the life of your Lordship many happy years. Natchitoches, September 14, 1772.

Your humble but faithful servant and subject kisses your Lordship's hand. JPH. DE LA PEÑA [rubric].

Señor Dn. Luis de Unsaga y Amezaga.

109. DE LA PENA TO UNZAGA Y AMEZAGA SEPTEMBER 14, 1772[6]

[3D] SEÑOR GOVERNOR-GENERAL,

My dear Sir: I received your Lordship's two letters dated July 30 and 31 through Mr. Joanie,[7] and went to inform the Señor Commandant[8] of their contents (in part) so that he might desist from his crass intentions. He wrote me a letter on the following day in which he said to me:

> MY DEAR SIR: On me alone is incumbent the duty of seeing that the honorable flag which the Señor Governor has deigned to concede to them be made, blessed, and delivered to the militiamen of my command. And with respect to your pretension relative to gathering the merchants of this district in your house, let me say that it is not permissible, since such dispositions are reserved to me. In my absence you might very well consult with the chiefs concerning anything that might be born of your zeal and authority, but only on condition of notifying me of the due ap-

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[6] Bancroft Coll., Louisiana.

[7] Joanis, Jouannis, etc.

[8] De Mézières.

probation before consummating the project. It is my duty to inform you that I am the only one in this case to whom the judicial proceedings are sent for execution. May God our Lord, etc. His signature, etc.

To all of this I have answered with silence, and I await your orders in the matter.

On the sixth of the present month he had a mass sung, and at the end had the Te Deum chanted for the success of the Spanish arms, for the victory of securing or effecting the royal treaties, and for having arrived safely. This reply which he encloses to you he put in the separate [letter] to exempt the militiamen who accompanied him from fatigue, putting in the first place the word of your Lordship for this purpose.

Through M. Joanie I have learned that several English merchants reside in Apeluzas, and have merchandise which they supply not only to the inhabitants of that place, but also, because of the short distance which intervenes, to the interior nations of Texas; and he substantiates his statement by saying that he has lodged in the house of one whose store was well supplied and whose sales were public.

Of the report given your Lordship in my letter, number 4, dated the twenty-second of the past month, regarding the establishment being made by the English in Orcoquisas,[9] I have found no verification of it in the places where I have been, as far as Nacocodoches.

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[9] This rumor was reported to Ripperda, who requested aid of Unzaga y Amezaga, in case it should prove true and help be needed; Unzaga thereupon ordered De Mézières to furnish such assistance as he could, in case of necessity. De Mézières sent two men to reconnoiter the coast, while Ripperda sent Luiz Cazorla, captain at La Bahia, with forty men for the same purpose. Cazorla kept an interesting diary, which is extant. The title is *Diario de mi marcha pa. el reconocimiento de la costa del Sur de esta Prov*^{a} *con un destacam*^{to} *de un Alfer*^{e}*, dos Sarg*^{tos}*, y quar*^{ta} *Soldados del Presidio de Sn. Antonio de Bexar y del de mi cargo*, etc. Cazorla set out on Sept. 17, crossed the Colorado by the Arkokisa road, on the twenty-first, and the Brazos on the twenty-first. At this point he started to go down to the coast to explore, but a short distance down

Since there has been no other report since the first, I infer that the wearing of blankets and the possession of other goods by Indians of that vicinity must be explained by the fact that they get them from the English merchants who go to them from Los Apeluzas, and that the report comes from this circumstance.

The English maintain themselves in Los Apeluzas with such audacity as to have said to Joanis not only that they would trade there but that they would go where they pleased. On the other hand, they supply in El Rapide the Aliba amon nation of that place. The people of this nation come to that of Natchitoches, and these latter go in to the Yatase (whose chief is a drunkard, and says that the French have hard heads, but the English better, as they told me). And thus they will introduce their trade among these nations of the interior.

The commandant of El Rapide set out yesterday for his destination, having been in this post twenty days.

M. Joanis requests me to intercede with your Lordship, asking that you allow him three months' time in which to collect what is owed to him. I report to you his good conduct and other circumstances in his favor,

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stream he encountered a rancheria of Carancahuasses, Cocos, Vidais, and Jaranames, who had English firearms and goods which they said they had secured from strangers beyond Arkokisa. Indeed, they were now hunting deer in order to sell the peltry to the same strangers at the *rancho del cambalache* beyond the Trinity. Taking one of the Indians as guide, Cazorla went on, crossing the San Jacinto on the twenty-seventh and reaching the Trinity on the twenty-eighth. Leaving the horses with ten men, he crossed over with thirty and that night reached the trading place. Here he found a large village of "Orcoquizas, Atacapas, Vidaes, and Cocos," all supplied with English goods, which they had secured from Frenchmen who lived a day and a half farther on, beyond the Neches, in the district of New Orleans, and who a few days before had been at the Trinity with Negroes driving mule cargoes of goods. The Indians reported that when an Englishman had come to the place recently they had sent word to Natchitoches, and in consequence he had been arrested and taken to that place. Cazorla found at the Trinity two Frenchmen by the name of Dutrive [Dauterrive?] and four Negroes.

for in the time which has been allowed him it is impossible to collect them.

I have just heard the report that one of the nations friendly to us has attacked the Apaches, or Cancis, as they are called, of whom they killed six men.

Likewise, they say that these Cancis attacked on the road the soldiers of San Antonio who were returning thither, disarmed them, stripped them, and took away their horses, but verification of this report is lacking. They suffered at San Antonio also a theft in the horse herd, at the hands of this same nation, two days after M. Mecieres set out from there. To him as well as to the father, Señor Ripperda wrote this news, ordering them to travel with caution. This I learned from the said father. I think it [the aggressor] is one of the nations which recently made peace, from which your Lordship can draw your own inferences.

This is all which at present occurs to me to communicate to your Lordship. May God our Lord preserve the life of your Lordship many happy years. Natchitoches, September 14, 1772.

I kiss the hand of your Lordship. Your most humble and most faithful servant and subject.

JPH. DE LA PEÑA [rubric].

Señor Dn. Luis de Unzaga y Amezaga.

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110. DE LA PENA TO UNZAGA Y AMEZAGA SEPTEMBER 14, 1772 [10]

[4TH] SEÑOR GOVERNOR-GENERAL,

My dear Sir: M. Borme, captain of the militia company of this post, has asked me to intercede with your Lordship requesting you to overlook any irregularities that may occur in the appointments which M. de Mecieres submits to your Lordship for your approval, and which he himself said should be sent certified. From this your Lordship may see what experience and military knowledge he has and what dispositions he will make if the necessity should arise. In short, lest I should make myself conspicuous, I omit what I might say concerning his intentions, which are so well known, even to the savages, whose contempt also they engender.

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[10] Bancroft Coll., Louisiana.

No one so opposes him as Vigotes, by virtue of the fact that when he went dressed in his breechcloth M. de Mercier was the chief trader and received him the same as any other; while at present he would have Vigotes obey him at his call whenever he remembers how he has seen him, although Vigotes is not subject to this jurisdiction. For this reason Vigotes thinks differently from what some suppose, as I set forth in the former letter.

He continues to require M. Leme to remain in this post, not permitting him to go up to collect the debts which he has scattered in the Quisenzes nation, demanding that he shall pay a debt which Morvan contracted with Lasis and Leblan, entertaining petitions against Morvan in his absence, and obliging Leme to pay. By this means and by telling him that his presence in this post is necessary, he in every way causes the person referred to expenses and losses. This is one of the good intentions of this gentleman.

The bearer, who is a blacksmith named Ygnacio Mayuc, a citizen of Rapide who was for some months in this post, has asked me to intercede with your Lordship to the end that you may grant him permission to settle here with his family. I do this because he is a person very useful to the citizens, as well as peaceable and of good parts.

M. de Mecieres has prevented Honore Vision from making known his descent to that capital, with express injunction not to take any letters for the citizens of this post or for me.

Not only have I been ignorant of the departure of this person but will be of that of every other if he continues this conduct; therefore, if I should fail in my duty to you it will not be due to my negligence, but the grave fault will be that of M. de Mecieres. May God preserve the life of your Lordship many happy years. Natchitoches, September 14, 1772.

The hand of your Lordship is kissed by your most humble and faithful servant and subject.

JPH. DE LA PEÑA [rubric].

Señor Don Luis de Unzaga y Amezaga.

III. DE LA PENA TO UNZAGA Y AMEZAGA
SEPTEMBER 14, 1772[11]

SEÑOR GOVERNOR-GENERAL — MY DEAR SIR: My present weakness, following the long illness which I suffered from the twenty-eighth of September up to the first of the present month (with the intermission of some days of improvement) being prostrate in bed all this time, and on the verge of paying the tribute which humanity owes to the all-powerful, prevents me now from writing at length, although I have informed you on all the principal points with which I am charged by your Lordship in this post as well as with regard to what I have already fathomed and learned, whose consequences, results, and purposes may be inferred from them [my letters]. I only need to know what it is that your Lordship wishes to be informed upon, as you ask of me in your last letter, in order that I may proceed to find it out for you.

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[11] Bancroft Coll., Louisiana. On October 11, 1772, De Mézières wrote to the governor asking permission to go to New Orleans for his health; on the same day he reported that Peña was ill [Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 81, nos. 594, 505, 506]. On January 18 Peña wrote to the governor telling of having been to Los Adaes to secure some deserters, in which he succeeded, and of his continued ill health, in spite of the fifteen mile journey which he had taken. He consequently asked permission to go to New Orleans. In another letter of the same date he reported a rumor that the Apache were coming to attack the Aynais, to avenge the murder of their ambassadors at the house of Sauto [Bancroft Coll., Louisiana].

Simon Jantillome (of whom in my first letter of the twenty-fourth of last month I report to your Lordship, to the effect that it was said that the nations had killed him) arrived from his embassy on the seventh, and told me that he went to introduce the soldiers who had come from San Antonio to the Taboyages Guachita, in order that they might know them by their signs. The soldiers were well received, not only by this nation, but by all through which they passed.

I am not surprised that this nation and the rest with whom the royal treaties were discussed should receive well both the Spaniards and the French, considering that they have not been declared enemies in the sense of making war upon us; and if, in times past, they have been guilty of some extortions from us on the roads, it has proceeded from their lack of powder, balls, and other things, which they experienced in both provinces during some years. But since traders have been supplied them we are all brothers, like them, they all protest.

The valor of Captain-general Vigotes has been like that of the mousetrap, which leaves the door open in order that the mouse may go in and eat the bait awaiting him under the deceitful trap which encloses it. Desirous of having it already in his claws, the mouse sets upon and tugs at the morsel. The device works and the enemy is caught. For thus did the said Vigotes. While he was in his house seven Cansis or Apaches entered and proposed peace and friendship to him. In recompense, and under the order which he had from M. De

Mecieres, he determined to kill them, and as a result three were slain, the rest escaping. This is the great deed of a captain-general of the savage nations; this is the way he attacks the enemy, by making war in order to betray them, and this will be the way not to succeed in what is intended.

The soldiers who were with Jantillome have returned to San Antonio. I do not know whether the nations have approached this quarter as was planned. I hope, Sir, that since I am continually ill and suffer such bad health, my misfortune may be sufficient to attract the attention of your Lordship and that you may deign to send my relief, so that by changing air and food I may survive somewhat longer.

If at the end of this month I should have more vigor and strength, I plan to go to Los Adays for six or eight days to see how the change of country affects me (I tell you this for your information) and at the same time to see if I can find out whether three men who live in that jurisdiction are deserters or not. It is said that two of them were of the Company of the Rhine and the other of the artillery of Havana. If this should prove true I will issue the proper papers for their arrest and will bring them to this post.

May God our Lord, etc., etc. Natchitoches, September 14, 1772. JOSEPH DE LA PEÑA.

Señor Dn. Luis de Unzaga y Amezaga.

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112. DE MEZIERES TO UNZAGA Y AMEZAGA[12]
FEBRUARY 10, 1773

SEÑOR GOVERNOR-GENERAL — SIR: The Osage nation, having from time immemorial devoted itself to the most sanguinary hostilities and to incessant robberies, has made itself justly execrable both to us and to all the tribes of this region. And although it has always been treated with benignity, the unworthy abuse which it has always made of this treatment to commit new outrages has made it clear that its reform can be effected only by force of arms. Therefore, the Indians would surely be exasperated if so cruel an enemy should be pardoned, or, what would be no less to be deplored, they would have little esteem for one who, instead of showing resentment, should take pains to pardon the aggressors. For these reasons, in my opinion, your Lordship's resolution with regard to seeking means to exterminate so pernicious a race, is very proper.

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[12] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 2357, no. 204. On the same date De Mézières acknowledged the receipt of his commission as lieutenant-governor [*ibid*, 203d].

The turbulence and ferocity of these Osages being equal to their cowardice, it is plain that the Indians mentioned have acquired for them as much hatred as contempt. Therefore, at the first advice they should receive on your Lordship's part, they would lend their aid, it being so much to their interest; and undoubtedly a very large number of men would gladly enlist, mounted, most of them with good weapons, and all determined to conquer or die.

Your Lordship's project is made feasible by the circumstance, militating in their favor, that these Osages are now hostile to the Arkensas, because the latter, in view of the alliance which they maintain with our Cadodachos, have already asked permission to unite with them to avenge the common injury; and they would do so upon receipt of the slightest suggestion.

But, knowing by experience that savages usually spoil their campaigns through lack of discipline, vigilance, and constancy, your Lordship would have to designate for them a chief (or two, for any contingency), whom they would be sure to accept with gratitude, love, and respect. And fortunate would be the subalterns to whom this honorable choice might fall, for so propitious an occasion to serve God and the king, to execute the orders of the superior, to become the benefactors of the country, and by this means to weld closer and closer the affection which is professed for our nation by the numerous ones of this vicinity.

Nothing will contribute more to the punishment of the Osages than the situation of their village. For, besides its being easy to surround their houses, which are all of reeds and close together, it is situated in the middle of a plain and surrounded in the summertime by the cornfields of the individuals, and at the same time very distant from their only spring, so that if that season were chosen for the invasion the attacking party would have the advantage of an abundance of grain to live upon; and by taking from the defenders this and also the abovementioned water supply, they would reduce them to the greatest extremes of thirst and hunger.[18]

The expenses would have to be borne by the Real Hacienda; but by making the expedition with due economy they would be limited to a moderate present of powder and balls for the Indians, some munitions for their leaders, and a small amount of provisions for the militiamen, by whom the chief of the expedition would have to be accompanied, for lack of regular troops. In this matter I will go no further, but will wait to discuss it verbally, when, taking advantage of the permission which your Lordship deigned to grant me, I shall have the honor to do obeissance to you.

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[18] For the location and other data concerning the Osage, see "Report of the Indian tribes who receive presents at St. Louis, dated November 15, 1777," in Houck, *Spanish Régime in Missouri*, vol. i, 144-145. The editor of that document has supplied punctuation and made two tribes out of the Panis Piquies, or Wichita.

May God spare the important life of your Lordship the many years which I ask and need. Natchitoches, February 10, 1773.

Señor Governor-general, the hand of your Lordship is kissed by your most humble servant and faithful subject. ATHANASE DE MÉZIÈRES [rubric].

Señor Brigadier and Governor-general, Don Luis de Unzaga y Amezaga.

113. THE BARON DE RIPPERDA TO UNZAGA Y AMEZAGA, FEBRUARY 11, 1773[14]

MY DEAR SIR: By your last letters dated the seventh of September and the seventh of October, ultimo, I see that, continuing your favors, you are interested in whatever may be for the welfare of this province in my charge and in the satisfaction that results to me in consequence. I see also that in proof of this you kindly repeated your orders to Captain Don Athanacio Demecieres to support whatever plans I might think necessary for the security of these presidios. These plans he has already carried out with success, having recently succeeded in having the Texas and Vidays declare war against the Apaches, three of whom they killed and over whom the Vidays danced. I hope that this may result in preventing the pernicious trade in guns which they carried on with the Apaches. For the rest, only the Comanches have failed to keep their promise, they having committed various robberies. Last month a servant of the presidio was found dead near it, being already devoured by the wild beasts, while at the same time the mules with which the father conductor of the missions was to take his supplies to the interior were run off; and although the soldiers were unable to overtake them and though from the direction taken [the malefactors] seemed to be Comanches, I presume with some foundation that they may have been Tancaues and apostate Jaranames. For although various demands have been made, the former have not come to make peace with me, except by word of others, always putting it off, while the latter have not yielded to my promise not to force them into the mission, nor to the apostolic influence of their minister, Father Abad, who retired to his mission without bringing that end about. I therefore charge M. Demeciers and the father conductor, as well as Chief Sauto, that if they have an opportunity to do so they must notify that nation and the apostates that unless they come to make peace with me, like the rest of the nations, their neighbors, they will be treated as our enemies; for although the Tancaues are not very numerous, they are capable of doing us great injury; besides, there may come mixed with them, as regularly happens, some of the friendly nations, who straightway exculpate themselves by saying that the aggressors are wrongheaded boys.

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[14] Bancroft Coll., Louisiana.

I am informed of the trade which that province in your Lordship's charge is permitted to carry on with the nations of your district, and that if any abuse had crept in you would have suppressed it, as well as that the English are coming to this district,[15] as I have reported to the most excellent Señor Viceroy of this New Spain.

Being fully aware of my obligation to your Lordship, and desiring to prove it by any service within my power, I trust that our Lord may preserve your life many years. San Antonio de Bexar, February 11, 1773.

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[15] *Esto* – this translation conforms with Ripperda's former usage of that word.

The hand of your Lordship is kissed by your most faithful and affectionate servant,

El Baron de Ripperda [rubric].

Señor Don Luis de Unzaga y Amezaga.

114. THE BARON DE RIPPERDA TO UNZAGA Y AMEZAGA, APRIL 17, 1773[16]

My dear Sir: The king having decided that after the first of next July a new regulation shall be established and observed, the captains of all the interior presidios of this New Spain ceasing to furnish supplies, he has conferred upon Don Hugo Oconor the new office of commandant-inspector of all of them, with the grade of colonel, attached to that office. As he is at present occupied in the establishment of the line which is to be formed of the presidios of Nueva Viscaya and Coahuila, and as he has to go next to establish and inspect those of Sonora, by order of the most excellent Señor Viceroy, he has delegated to me the first inspection and establishment in this province in my charge, which ought to take place beginning the first of July, according to the printed [regulation] which has come from the court. This provides for dismantling the presidios and abandoning the sites of Los Adaes and Orcoquiza, care being taken that the few inhabitants in them shall retire to this villa or its neighborhood and that land be distributed for their subsistence; and for extinguishing at the same time the useless missions of Nacogdoches, Ays, Adaes, and Orcoquiza. Thus there will remain only one company of eighty soldiers and ten Indians in this presidio, their captain being the governor, with [a salary of] four thousand dollars, and fifty in the presidio of La Bahia. For carrying this regulation into effect

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[16] Bancroft Coll., Louisiana.

I have not as yet the necessary instructions,[17] but as the time is short, and since some of the citizens of Los Adaes will be sowing, I send them this notice in advance, so that, notwithstanding their slender means, they may prepare to move to this settlement at the first order, which will follow very shortly. Although I have no doubt your Lordship already has heard of this, I find it convenient to report it to you myself, and to tell you that although the missions named have made no progress in so many years, I know that this news will cause great surprise to the surrounding nations accustomed to living near the Spaniards and missions, where many were baptized on the deathbed, especially the Aes, who live near the mission of this name. In view of this, and in order that your Lordship may aid me to prevent any ill feeling which might be felt among the Texas, Vidais, Orcoquizas, Aes, and Adaes, I hope that you will order the lieutenant-governor, Don Atanasio Demecieres, to be on the watch, and to provide a way to make these nations, and even those recently become friends, understand that the Spaniards and missionaries are departing because now the inhabitants of La Luiciana are as much Spaniards as those of San Antonio; that this is a better country for their crops; that they will be as safe with them as with the Spaniards themselves, and other similar arguments intended to quiet them. I know that these means will aid in the present measure, and be of great service to both majesties; therefore I have no doubt your Lordship will assist in carrying them out with your well known zeal, in the way suggested or in any other which your intelligence may find suitable.

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[17] The instructions are in *Historia*, vol. 51, ff. 79-90. They are entitled *Ynstrucion Reservada qe. ha de tener presente el Coronel de Cavalleria Baron de Riperda Governador de la Prov^{a} de texas para la practica y observancia en los dos Presidios de ella del nuebo Reglam^{to} qe. su Magd. se ha servido expedir en Diez de Sept^{re} del ano proximo pasado, y demas puntos que contiene, para el Gov^{no} Politico de dha Provincia dispuesta por mi Dn. Hugo Oconor, Coronel de Infanteria Comandte-Ynspector de las Provincias Ynternas de este Reyno de Nueva Espana de Orden del Exmo. Sor. Fr. Dn. Antonio Maria Bucareli y Ursua, Virrey Governador, y Capitan General de ella.* It consists of thirty-nine articles.

The Comanches continue to steal horses in this region, and this winter a servant was found dead in the presidio. This month there has been great persecution and many robberies, whose perpetrators are very difficult to discover because of their dexterity and of the heavy timber of the country. It has also been difficult to overtake the more than one hundred horses which they carried off, besides killing a corporal who, with four soldiers, was going in their sight. The officer who, with sufficient force, followed the trail, lost it. I therefore repeat my desire to serve your Lordship, and beg God to preserve your life many years.

San Antonio de Bexar, April 17, 1773. The hand of your Lordship is kissed by your most attentive and faithful servant, EL BARON DE RIPPERDA [rubric].

Señor Don Luis de Unzaga y Amezaga.

115. PASSPORT PERMITTING DE MEZIERES TO GO TO FRANCE, APRIL 23, 1773[18]

Don Luis de Unzaga y Amezaga, brigadier of the royal army, governor-general of this city and of the province of La Luisiana, and inspector general of all the troops, regular and militia, that may be in it, etc.,

Concedes free and safe passport to Don Atanazio de Mezieres, lieutenant-governor of the post of Natchitoches, dependent upon this capital, that he may go to the kingdom of France to transact various affairs of private interest which he has pending there, by virtue of the royal license which he obtained, dated the sixteenth of November of the past year, 1772. Therefore, I request the commanders-general of the naval forces of his Majesty and all those of the friendly powers, not to hinder his journey in any way, but, on the contrary, to give and have given to him all the aid which he may need. Given in New Orleans, April 23, 1773.

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[18] Bancroft Coll., Louisiana; also in Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 566, no. 392. With this document, in the latter collection, is a copy of De Mézières's commission as lieutenant-colonel, dated Nov. 6, 1773. *Ibid.*, no. 393.

[A seal] LUIS DE UNZAGA Y AMEZAGA [rubric].

By order of his Lordship.

JOSEPH FOUCHER [rubric].

[Endorsement] A memorandum was made of the foregoing passport in the Contaduría Principal of the army and province of La Luisiana in my charge, proper note being made on the contract of the interested party, in safeguard of the Real Hacienda. New Orleans, April 25, 1773. ANTONIO JPH. DE AGUIAR [rubric].

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116. MEDINA[19] TO O'CONOR, MARCH 8, 1774[20]

MY DEAR SIR: On the twenty-first of last February I arrived at this presidio without incident. Upon my arrival I learned that the governor of the province had set out in pursuit of the horse-herd which had been run off by the enemies of the place, who left only the worst and the leanest, since the Comanches, who were the perpetrators of the robbery, had time to choose to their liking, because of the carelessness and lack of vigilance over the herd, for, trusting no doubt in the false peace-agreements, they retired to sleep, and the herd was released as soon as the guard exchanged horses. On the next day the guard, which consisted of sixteen men, followed the trail, thinking it had been a stampede. They went as far as Los Pe[de]rnales[21] where, being now undeceived, and knowing that it was the Indians who had run off the herd but not being able to overtake them, they turned back.

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[19] Medina was *ayudante-inspector* of the interior presidios, under O'Conor, who was *inspector-comandante*.

[20] *Historia*, vol. 93, f. 127. *Documents* 116-133 are printed from official copies.

On the second of the month the governor returned, having lost some of the horses which he had taken for the enterprise. He had set out some seven or eight days after the theft with over one hundred thirty men of this company and that of La Bahia, citizens of this presidio, and mission Indians, with the intention of following the trail to their rancherías; but, through inexperience, and having taken no one who knew the country, he was obliged to return, saying that at the San Sabas River they lost the trail because of the great multitude of buffalo which crossed it, and that although they went about hunting it for two days they could not find it. I think that this will be all for the best, because of the poor horses, the lack of rations, and the bad equipment and armament of his men. But some persons say and I am convinced that the citizens lost them on purpose, in order not to be put to extreme want.

In this presidio there are three Frenchmen, one who serves as interpreter, another, a M. Menart,[22] and a third, who arrived early in February with some Tancahues Indians. Two days after the last had gone with Sergeant Pedro Granados and fifteen soldiers to search for some mines which these Indians reported to be in the direction of the Brazos de Dios, the robbery occurred. The governor sent him an order to reconnoiter the country, taking the Indians with him that they might help him find the trail; but as soon as they heard the report that the presidial drove had been run off they disappeared during the first night, it not being known what direction they took. For this reason the sergeant had to return to the presidio, as the governor was angry.

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[21] The Pedernales is a stream flowing into the Colorado, from the southwest, a few miles above the city of Austin, Texas.

[22] A Mr. Menard was among a number of "objectionable" persons whom De Mézières expelled from Natchitoches some time before January 23, 1770 [Unzaga y Amezaga to De Mézières, Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 188-1, no. 30]. A little later in the same year De Mézières compelled a man named Menard to move into the town of Natchitoches, so that he could be watched. It is not clear whether the two were identical or not, or whether they were identical with the Menard at San Antonio [Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 110, no. 266. Unzaga y Amezaga to De Mézières, March 16, 1770.]

The governor took the same Frenchman that he might converse with the Indians in case he encountered them; but as he failed to do this, the Frenchman returned to this presidio. He is staying at the houses on the other side of the arroyo, awaiting the arrival of the Indians, with whom, I think, and as I have been informed, he expects some tobacco, and perhaps other contraband goods. With respect to this matter I will keep on the lookout. These are not the only Frenchmen who have come to this province with the Indians, for there have been various others also, who have stopped at the house of the governor and returned again to the Nations of the North, serving as messengers to bring and carry letters to and from Natchitoches.

The French continue to trade in guns, powder, and balls, and owe their suppliers more than six hundred horses. The latter do not raise horses and mules, therefore, in order to supply the lack they have to get them from the Indians in trade; and for this it is the rule that the latter, for they have no other occupation, come to steal in our country, as in fact they are doing now. They never enter this presidio without taking off horses and mules when they leave. But there is no human being who can convince this governor, or make him think that they are the Nations of the North; and if anybody says they are he puts him in jail, and only by taking serious measures can the matter be remedied.

According to what Captain Luis Menchaca[23] tells me, he has informed your Lordship of everything in great detail, and I therefore refrain from doing so until I can do it with judicial instruments. With respect to the supplies and the administration which this company has observed in the management of the interests, I shall report with the rest of the documents of the review, which I shall begin after the fifteenth of the month.

After the company was put on its new footing,[24] the governor sent, on his own account, to the fair of Saltillo for a consignment of those goods which he has most interest in buying there; and now he asks that both these and those which recently came to him from Mexico, as well as what he received from Don Angel de Martos's[25] balance be taken by the agent, under the pretext of being effects left over; but fortunately the agent has learned from Don Luis Menchaca what he ought to do.

I met the corporal, Josef Antonio Saucedo, who was in command of the guard of the horseherd when it was run off by the Indians, when he was on the way to see the governor. He was fearful of the punishment which the governor might give him; for, besides taking the detachment from him on the way when he set out, they say that the governor said that he would give him a beating when he returned. I ordered him to come with me, which he did, and kept him under arrest until the arrival of the governor, who asked only to give him the punishment which he deserved as deserter, without immunity, and not for permitting the horseherd to be run off without resistance. It appears that he has determined to punish him with only four months' imprisonment, for first desertion.

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[23] Luis Antonio Menchaca had at this time been in the province of Texas more than thirty years. For some ten years he had been captain of the presidio of San Antonio and *justicia mayor* of the villa of San Fernando and of the five mission pueblos established on the river. [Menchaca to O'Conor, April 25, 1773.]

[24] The reference is to the reorganization of the frontier described in *Document* 114.

[25] Angel Martos Navarrete was governor of Texas from 1757 to 1766. He was a *teniente de navio* [naval-lieutenant]. In his administration attempts were made through Father Calahorra y Saenz, of Nacogdoches, to establish a mission for the Wichita tribes. In the course of the discussion of the matter it was suggested that the presidio of San Saba be transferred to their country. This makes it plain that the proposal of Ripperda in 1772 was not altogether a new one. [Bonilla, *Breve Compendio*, 57-58.]

The Indian José Miguel has fled among the Lipanes with all his family, but I have ordered that they recover him in the presidio of Santa Rosa, together with another named Blas, of the mission of San Antonio, who has joined him.

I should like to report to your Lordship at this time with all the clearness and the detail merited, but this is impossible. I hope, however, soon to report everything which takes place in this province; and until I do I remain praying the divine Majesty to preserve the important life of your Lordship the many years that I desire. San Antonio de Béxar, March 8, 1774.

Your hand is kissed by your most humble subject.

ROQUE MEDINA.

Señor Don Hugo Oconor.

[Endorsement] This is a copy of the original in my possession, which I quote. Real Presidio de San Antonio Bucarely,[26] April 20, 1774. DON HUGO OCONOR.

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117. MENCHACA TO O'CONOR, MARCH 9, 1774[27]

SEÑOR INSPECTOR-COMMANDANT – MY DEAR SIR: Having reported to your Lordship what had occurred in this province up to the tenth of last January, I must now molest your attention to inform you what has happened in this[28] presidio from that day to the present time.

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[26] This presidio was in Coahuila.

[27] *Historia*, vol. 93, f. 122.

On the eleventh a citizen of this villa, having set out for the exterior, was robbed of his horses on the Medina River by the Indians of the North, and returned on foot. I do not know what will be done about it.

On the twelfth a sergeant who had gone out to reconnoiter arrived at this presidio. It is said that he learned nothing. On the thirteenth it was rumored here that the Indians of the North had killed at the crossing of the Nueces River some families who were going from La Bahía out of the province, but I do not know whether this is true or not. On the fourteenth some citizens who were killing cattle in the direction of Peñitas arrived at this presidio with the news that the Indians of the North had pursued them and forced them to abandon the horses which they were driving before them, and that on this side of the Guadalupe River there were plain signs of the Indians of the North.

It was learned immediately afterwards that the Indians of the North ran off from La Bahía two herds of mares belonging to a citizen of that place called Francisco Tremiño. It was said that they reported to the captain, and that seeing that he took no measures regarding the theft, some citizens asked permission to set out in pursuit of the herds,[29] to which the captain would not consent. On the eighteenth the sergeant of La Bahía, named Manuel de Ybarbu, arrived at this presidio with the news that the Indians of the North had stolen the mules of Santos Tixerina, which had passed near the presidio. I have not heard what the captain did concerning this theft, but I do know that the animals were not recovered. From that day to the twenty-seventh the only occurrence was the arrival of Corporal Gallardo from the detachment of El Cibolo, with three Mayeye Indians who had attacked the ranch of San Pedro and the shepherd who was guarding the sheep. These Indians reported that they had separated from the other band which accompanied them, but it is my opinion that this was false, for they had come from the direction of La Bahía. As none of these reports have been investigated as they should be, because of the confidence placed in these Indians, most of the time it is not known who causes the trouble; but what is certain is that everybody suffers.

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[28] The literal statement is exactly contrary to the rendering given here, but it is evident that *el dejar* is superfluous.

[29] Literally, in pursuit of "the robbery," i.e. the thing stolen.

On the twenty-eighth some soldiers arrived from the Thancahues with two Frenchmen and some Indians of that nation. They report that there were some Frenchmen with their families living among the Thancahues, and that as soon as they arrived two Frenchmen left with letters from this Señor Governor for Natchitoches.

From the twenty-ninth to the third of February the citizens began to go out to the cattle killing. On the fourth Sergeant Pedro Granados set out with twenty soldiers, seven Tancahue Indians, three Frenchmen, and seven citizens of this villa, under orders from this governor to take fourteen soldiers and accompany the citizens to those nations, who were going to search for a mine of which they had heard,[80] the rest of the soldiers to remain with those who were going to Guadalupe to make carts.

On the sixth of the said month, about nine o'clock in the morning, the soldier named Andrés Flores came from the place where the horseherd is with the report that the Indians of the North had robbed the place on the night of the fifth, and that the corporal of the herd, with the few remaining horses, which could not have been more than one hundred of the poorest, had led the squadron over the trail in pursuit of the robbers. This news was reported to the governor before he went to mass, but, notwithstanding this, mass was said and preaching over before the governor went out to give orders. They consisted in commanding Sergeant Ruiz to get himself ready with the few men in the presidio, who were twelve in number, and to go out to join the guard of the horseherd. Accordingly the sergeant set out about eleven o'clock in the morning; but as they were mounted on poor horses they did not overtake the guard of the horseherd, nor did the latter catch the Indian thieves. He at once ordered Sergeant Pedro Granados to increase his detachment to the number of fifty men by enlisting some of the citizens who were killing cattle in the direction of San Marcos; to go to the Colorado River; ascend it to the junction with the San Saba; and there await the men who were following the trail. The citizens did not go with the sergeant, for what reason I do not know. The sergeant went where he was ordered, leaving six soldiers at Guadalupe with the paymasters.

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[80] The search for this mine no doubt grew out of the reports by De Mézières, who in one of his early communications to Unzaga y Amezaga stated that he knew the Wichita country to be rich in minerals, and who in his report of the 1772 expedition dwelt upon the meteorite in the same region.

About one o'clock in the afternoon the governor sent a citizen to the detachment of El Zibolo[31] to ask reinforcements of men and horses, because he had decided to set out; in fact, on the seventh the reinforcements reached him. About twelve o'clock on the same day he sent to ask for aid of the same kind from La Bahía, and on the ninth twenty soldiers from that presidio with two hundred horses arrived after the governor had already left, on the same day, with forty citizens, ten soldiers and Indians of the missions. The reinforcement set out for its destination and overtook the governor in camp on Arroyo de Leon.

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[31] The reference is to the new settlement of Santa Cruz del Cibolo, between San Antonio and Goliad. See *Document* 156 for a reference to its establishment.

On the tenth the governor encountered the guard of the horseherd and that of Sergeant Ruiz about seven leagues from this presidio, before entering Los Puertos. They returned together over the trail. The report was made by Francisco de la Garza, a citizen of this place, whom the governor had sent back with two boys to bring a drove of tired horses. They reached this presidio on the eleventh, and up to the fifteenth nothing occurred except that on that day Sergeant Granados arrived with his detachment. Not knowing the road, and his horses having tired out, he did not go to the place to which he was ordered by the governor to await him, namely, to the junction of the San Sabas River with the Colorado. From this day to the twenty-first there was no noteworthy incident, except that on that day, about eleven o'clock, the agent of this troop arrived, without incident, from San Luis, with two thousand four hundred dollars in a box, they say, and the balance of the allowance of this presidio in goods.

About three in the afternoon of the same day the commandant, Señor Don Roque de Medina, arrived at this presidio with five soldiers and some citizens from the Rio Grande without incident, except that they met on the way Corporal Josef Antonio Saucedo, whom the said Señor imprisoned in the guard-house.

On the twenty-third news came that the night before the Indians of the North had killed three cattle about half a league from this presidio. Señor Don Roque[83] ordered the report investigated, with the few troops which he had, and it proved to be true.

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[83] Medina.

On the twenty-seventh the lieutenant-general, the Señor Curate, a soldier, and the citizens who had gone out with the Señor Governor to reconnoiter, brought the news that they had followed the trail to the San Sabas River, whence they returned because of the small number of their pack animals; and that the Señor Governor had remained on the other side of the presidio of Guadalupe with the troops.

On the first of March Sergeant Ruiz arrived at this presidio with some soldiers whom the governor had ordered to recover the tired horses which they left when they went to reconnoiter; but the sergeant ascertained that the Indians had already run them off. On the same day arrived the lieutenant of La Bahía, whom the governor sent with some soldiers to bring the tired horses, because this gentleman remained to follow a trail of the Indians.

On the second the governor arrived at this presidio with the troops, not having overtaken the Indians whom he had pursued, because he lost the trail, they say. From that day to this no especial incident has come to my notice. Since this is all that occurs to me, I close, obedient to your Lordship, and asking God our Lord to preserve your life as many years as he is able. San Antonio de Bejar, March 9, 1774.

Señor Commandant, your Lordship's hand is kissed by your most faithful servant.

LUIS ANTONIO MENCHACA.

Señor Don Hugo Oconor.

[Endorsement] This is a copy of the original in my possession which I quote. Real Presidio de San Antonio Bucarely, April 20, 1774. DON HUGO OCONOR.

118. O'CONOR TO PACHECO, APRIL 20, 1774[33]

In view of your long experience with past and present conditions in the province of Texas, since you have lived in it the long period of almost twenty years, I order you to state hereinafter the number of armed men which the Baron de Ripperda is able to muster in the Presidio of San Antonio de Vexar to resist any invasion which the hostile Indians of that district might attempt, and to indicate whether you think that the present occurrences are due to the small forces possessed by the governor of that province.

May God preserve you many years. Real Presidio de San Antonio Bucarely, April 20, 1774.

DON HUGO OCONOR.

Señor Don Rafael Martinez Pacheco.

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119. PACHECO TO O'CONOR, APRIL 20, 1774[34]

SEÑOR COMMANDANT-INSPECTOR: Complying with the present order from your Lordship to the effect that, in view of my knowledge of the province of Tejas, I shall state its present condition and the hostilities of the enemies from the Nations of the North, and whether there are sufficient forces to enable the governor of that province to restrain them, let me speak with the frankness and plainness with which I am accustomed to tell what I know, without regard to persons, as has been shown by the various representations which I have made to the most excellent Señor Viceroy, El Marqués de Croix and to the present most excellent Señor Viceroy. In them I have made known to his Excellency that the backwardness of the inhabitants of that province arises from the ignorance and bad conduct of the governor of the province, since he has under his command one hundred fifty regulars in the presidio of San Antonio, forty in the presidio of Bahía and one hundred fifty citizens and mission Indians of the said presidio of San Antonio. For he has not sent the troops on scouting expeditions on the frontiers to drive the enemy back,[35] which is the only means of restraining them before they commit their robberies and murders, as he has been told on several occasions, but which he did not put into practice until the hostile Indians of the North committed their murders and robberies. To this is to be added the pretended treaties which he made with those Nations of the North through Don Atanacio de Misieres, commandant of Nachitos, a person who has always lived among those nations, trading in guns and ammunition, since the time of Don Jacinto de Barrios.[36]

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[33] *Historia*, vol. 93, f. 131.

[34] —*Ibid.*, f. 132.

By these deceitful treaties the Nations of the North were enabled to enter freely into the presidio of San Antonio and others, and at the same time to commit robberies and murders, both when entering and on leaving. The troops were not sent beforehand to restrain them, lest it should be said that these Indians committed the robberies and murders on the occasions when they have entered and left under the guise of peace. Thus it is seen that it is not for lack of forces that they have not been restrained from committing their hostilities, but because the governor of that province has not permitted it, for the well-known purpose of giving a good appearance to the treaties, which the same deeds have discredited. Now the presidio of San Antonio de Bejar has more forces; but to prove that it is not the purpose of the governor of that province to punish the hostile Indians of the North, who have committed the continual robberies and murders, he has concentrated in the presidio of San Antonio de Bejar and Bahia del Espiritu Santo, all the forces of the province, which amount to five hundred men at arms, counting the Indians of the missions, as is seen by their classification: – eighty of the regular company of the said presidio; fifty of the presidio of La Bahia; thirty who were discharged from the presidio of El Orocoquisac and who remained armed and mounted; one hundred fifty citizens of the presidio and villa of San Antonio de Bejar; one hundred forty citizens of the presidio of Los Adaes; and fifty Indians of the five missions. From this your Lordship will comprehend the cause of the excesses that have recently occurred in the presidio of San Antonio de Bejar, under the command of the said governor of Tejas, Don Juan Maria, Baron de Ripperda, as well as from the respective complaints which the cabildo and citizens of the villa of San Fernando and the presidio of San Antonio de Bejar made last year. May God preserve your Lordship many years. Presidio of San Antonio Bucareli de la Babia, April 20, 1774.

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[35] *Alternandolos.*

[36] Lieutenant-colonel Jacinto de Barrios y Jáuregui was governor from 1751 to 1757. It was during his term that the presidio and mission at the mouth of the Trinity were established. He, too, was the Texas governor who was most criticised for contraband trade with the French of Louisiana. [Bonilla, *Breve Compendio*, 48-57.]

Your hand is kissed by your most obedient servant.

RAPHAEL PACHECO.

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120. O'CONOR TO THE VICEROY, APRIL 20, 1774 [87]

MOST EXCELLENT SIR: The accompanying copies, numbers 1 and 2,[88] of the letters which I received to-day, will make known to your Excellency's highness what recently happened to the horseherd of the presidio of

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[87] *Historia*, vol. 93, f. 134.

[88] The reference is to *Documents* 116 and 117.

San Antonio de Vejar in the province of Los Tejas. It was carried off by the very Indians who daily enter that presidio as friends, without any one being able to persuade the governor that these Indians were the perpetrators of the robberies and murders which are constantly experienced in that province; for he desires to promote his policy, contrary to the superior orders of your Excellency and to my repeated warnings concerning the little or no confidence merited by the deceitful treaty of these Indians, who have broken it as many times as they have promised to keep it, as your Excellency must have seen by the many copies of these warnings which I have directed to your superior hands.

Since Don Roque de Medina has been an eyewitness of what has happened in the presidio of Vexar and of the residence there of some Frenchmen who live by their trade with the Indians, I quote what this official sets forth, begging your Excellency to please keep in mind what I have reported hitherto concerning the province of Los Texas, and especially my opinion number 14, which treats of these matters.

As your Excellency will note by the accompanying document number 3,[89] the governor of that province, the Baron de Ripperda, can muster in the presidio in his charge five hundred men at arms, all veterans, with whom to restrain, if he wished, the pride of the barbarians who infest it. Besides this he has arms and munitions which were sent him for this purpose by the most excellent Señor Marqués de Croix, your Excellency's predecessor. From all this the plain inference is that the deplorable state of that province does not come from a lack of forces or of warnings calculated for its security, but from the governor's desire to promote his policy, he despising the repeated orders for the defensive war in his possession which he ought to obey until other measures can be taken.

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[89] The reference is to *Document* 119.

With my orders the governor has not complied at all, and consequently I regard it idle to admonish him what he ought to do on the present occasion. Neither can I now provide for the despatch of an officer, with troops of the expedition, to that province to execute in it your Excellency's and my orders, because the four hundred men of which it is composed are covering a cordon of presidios[40] which embraces at least seven hundred leagues of country. For these powerful reasons no means remain for me now for suppressing these outrages except to report them to your Excellency's highness, in order that, in view of everything, you may deign to decide what may best please you, which will be, as always, for the best.

May our Lord preserve your Excellency many years. Royal Presidio of San Antonio Bucarely, April 20, 1774.

Most Excellent Sir, your Excellency's hand is kissed by your most humble servant, DON HUGO OCONOR.

Most excellent Señor Bailio Fray Don Antonio Bucarely y Ursua.

121. O'CONOR TO THE BARON DE RIPPERDA APRIL 21, 1774[41]

In your letter of the seventh of last February, your Lordship tells me that what you had expected for several days had taken place, namely, that the Indians had run off by means of a stampede in the darkness of the night preceding about three hundred horses, there being only about one hundred left, since half were engaged in the cattle killing and wood cutting, which your Lordship has ordered annually; that a corporal and six soldiers were engaged in escorting the wood cutters at Guadalupe; that the friendly nations being quiet, you improved the opportunity to send the first sergeant with fourteen soldiers (who should have been escorting the cattle killers, who were numerous and extended clear to the Colorado River) to the first pueblo of the Taobayais to cultivate their friendship, and some citizens to look for a rich mine which is supposed to be in that region; that under these circumstances the corporal of the horseherd set out; with the rest of the dispositions dictated by your Lordship and related in your mentioned letter of February 7, last, it being your intention to set out in person to restore the horseherd and punish the haughty enemy.

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[40] The line extending from Texas to the Gulf of California.

[41] *Historia*, vol. 93, f. 138.

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All of these dispositions of your Lordship would have merited my approval if I did not perceive the serious consequences which must always come from the free entry of the hostile nations, which your Lordship ranks as friendly, into that presidio; for indeed, while some are talking to your Lordship, assuring you of the sincerity of their friendship, their companions have an opportunity to spy out the horseherd and run it off without risk or fear of being punished, because of the security which they promise themselves through their deceitful treaties, their acts being attributed, as is the custom, to others, who perhaps are at the time far distant from these districts. Therefore, it is not strange that what your Lordship had expected should have occurred, especially since the Indians found the horseherd alone and with no guard to defend it.

In letters of the seventeenth and the twenty-fifth of last February I told you what I thought concerning the Nations of the North; therefore there is nothing for me to do now but to repeat that your Lordship should scrupulously observe what the most excellent viceroy charged you concerning the same matter under dates of September 16 and October 7; in the wise and prudent decision of his Excellency under date of December 9, 1772; and in the two subsequent orders of his Excellency dated the sixth of last January. All of these were issued as a result of the opinions submitted by your Lordship to his Highness concerning the treaties with the Nations of the North; of articles 32, 33, 34, and 35[42] of my reserved instruction; and of the admonitions which I made to your Lordship in my official communications, above mentioned, dated the seventeenth and the twenty-fifth of last February, treating of the same subjects. These provisions will without doubt facilitate bringing the much needed quiet to the unhappy inhabitants of those districts, and to your Lordship the success which you desire in commanding that province in your charge.

[Facsimile of the signature of Hugo O'Conor, governor of Texas. From original in the Béxar Archives]

From the sally of your Lordship in pursuit of the horseherd there will result, without any doubt, not only its restoration, but also the condign punishment of the Indians who ran it off; while your Lordship will be relieved of whatever doubt you may have as to who were the authors of this evil deed. Of these happy improvements I await the proper reports.

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[42] Article 32 provided that the governor should not permit stealing and other outrages committed by the Indians to go unpunished, nor allow them to commit these outrages under the guise of peace; article 33, that under no circumstances should the Indians be supplied with firearms or other weapons; article 34, that they should not be promised presidios, settlements, and peace in the name of the king without first reporting to O'Conor; article 35, that since war between the Apaches and the "Norteños" was advantageous to the Spanish settlements, it should not be interfered with.

With respect to the mine which your Lordship says there is in the vicinity of El Taobayás, I have no advice to give in the matter, since cognizance of it does not fall within my jurisdiction. May God preserve your Lordship many years. Royal Presidio of San Antonio Bucarely, April 21, 1774. DON HUGO O'CONOR.
Señor Baron de Ripperda.

[Endorsement] This is a copy of the original.
DON HUGO OCONOR.

122. O'CONOR TO THE BARON DE RIPPERDA
APRIL 23, 1774[48]

In letters dated the seventeenth and the twenty-fifth of last February which were delivered into your Lordship's own hands by Adjutant-inspector Don Roque de Medina, I gave you my opinion of the treaties made with the Nations of the North, telling you that you should be cautious with the Lipanes, in order not to be taken by surprise by either, and that your Lordship should not fail to observe what the most excellent Señor Viceroy commands you in his wise and discreet orders of September 16, October 7, December 9, of the year 1772; the two of the sixth of January of last year, and articles 32, 33, 34, and 35 of the reserved instruction, which, under date of May 6, 1773, I sent to your Lordship; certain that in the due fulfillment of these superior determinations your Lordship will find success, and the clarification of the doubts of which you tell me in your two letters of March 8 last relative to the method by which you should proceed with the Nations of the North. May God preserve your Lordship many years.

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[48] *Historia*, vol. 93, f. 138.

Royal Presidio of San Antonio Bucarely, April 23, 1774.
DON HUGO OCONOR.
Señor Baron de Ripperda.

123. THE VICEROY TO THE BARON DE RIPPERDA
MAY 8, 1774[44]

I have just learned with surprise that, notwithstanding the care and vigilance which I have repeatedly charged your Lordship to observe, to the end that you cease to be deluded by the deceitful promises and pretended peace-agreements of the Indians of those frontiers, the Comanches have stolen the horseherd of that presidio, so much to their satisfaction and liking that they have been able to select the best, leaving the unserviceable.

Such an occurrence must arise from many defects which your Lordship ought to have corrected as a result of my orders and of the instructions which have been sent to you by the commandant-inspector of those provinces for your guidance; but after learning of your failure to observe them, and of the carelessness with which you deal with enemies who so often have given proof of their infidelity and inconstancy in keeping the promised faith, even more reprehensible and not to be dissimulated is the lack of vigilance with which guard was kept, as is evident to me.

In the year 1772 your Lordship reported that commerce with and the giving arms and munitions as presents to the Indians of the North ought to continue. But under dates of December 9 and 19 of the same year, and of January 6, March 5, May 25, June 30, and others I have given repeated orders to cut off this abuse. Your Lordship has replied several times that you would do so, but after all this I now receive thoroughly reliable reports that not only was this disobedience continued, but also that there are accustomed to live in that presidio Frenchmen who, under pretext of serving as interpreters encourage the same commerce. It being necessary now to take vigorous measures, I order your Lordship not only not to observe the peace with the Indians under former conditions, but also to cut off absolutely correspondence with the governor of Nachitoches and with all the rest of the Frenchmen, not permitting them in that presidio under any circumstances.

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[44] *Historia*, vol. 93, f. 137.

It is evident to me, also, that with more than five hundred veteran men-at-arms, which your Lordship can assemble, it would be easy for you to defend the province and restrain the pride of the barbarians who trouble it, especially since there are in it arms and munitions which were sent for this purpose by my predecessor, the Marqués de Croix. From this the obvious inference is that the bad state of the province does not arise from a lack of forces; and if your Lordship continues to disregard my orders of July 28, August 8, November 17, 1773, and of January 4, February 9, March 1, and April 6 of this year, or the strict charges given you by the commandant-inspector, to whom your Lordship ought to show subordination, obeying all his orders, and reporting whatever may occur, so that he may dictate the proper remedy, I shall find it necessary to take due measures. May God preserve your Lordship many years. May 8, 1774.
Señor Baron de Ripperda.

124. O'CONOR TO THE VICEROY, MAY 13, 1774[45]

MOST EXCELLENT SIR — SIR: Considering the slight knowledge possessed by the Baron de Ripperda with respect to the deceitful practices and mental habits of the

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[45] *Historia*, vol. 93, f. 141.

Nations of the North, it has seemed to me proper to remind him, as is shown by the adjoined copies numbers 1 and 2, to scrupulously fulfill the repeated and wise advice of your Excellency concerning these matters, assuring him that in doing so he will find the success of his efforts and the attainment of the quiet of that unfortunate province. On account of my many duties and because all of the troops of my command are occupied in supporting the presidios of the line, which great work merits every preference until it is entirely completed, it is not possible for me at present to dictate more effective measures for restraining the insolence that has been acquired by the Nations of the North as a result of the undue trustfulness with which the Baron de Ripperda assented to the malicious flattery of Don Atanasio de Mizierez, mediator of these imaginary truces.

In my opinion there is no surer means, should your Excellency be pleased to adopt it, whereby your Excellency's condescension may clear up the chaos of confusion which, without doubt, will be caused to your Highness by such contrary reports as those which have hitherto been made concerning the Nations of the North, some protesting their sincerity and constancy in keeping their promise and others the continuation of their hostilities, than to order to appear before the superiority of your Excellency the Reverend Fathers Santa Maria and Abad, both religious of the College of Gualalupe and missionaries who have been in the province of Texas, and who accompanied Dn. Atanasio de Mizierez on the expedition which he made to the Nations of the North,[46] without letting their prelate or any other person know the reason of their being called. After your Excellency has examined each one separately concerning the treaties made with Mizierez, also requiring Santa Maria to present to you the diary or booklet which he has written of his observations concerning these grave matters, your condescension will be able to dictate with your accustomed wisdom your superior decisions to serve as a guide for my operations. It does not seem to me wise, Sir, that I should now take measures against nations whom the Baron de Ripperda so insists that he has subdued, lest in consequence I should expose myself to the risk that this knightly governor might report to the superior government that the Nations of the North have risen up as a result of my dispositions, which, as I understand and have heard unofficially, is what the governor aspires to do.

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[46] Father Abad did not, as O'Conor intimates, accompany De Mézières on his expedition of 1770, though he did accompany him from Béxar to Nacogdoches after his expedition of that year.

All the foregoing considerations require that the condescension of your Excellency, after having secured the fullest reports, should be pleased to order me what to do in this very difficult matter, notwithstanding the fact that the governor has superabundant forces, not only for defensive but also for offensive war, as your Excellency will have seen from my opinion number 187.

All of this I make known to your Excellency in fulfillment of my duty, desirous of meriting your superior gratitude.

May our Lord preserve the most excellent person of your Excellency many years. Royal Presidio of San Antonio Bucarely, May 13, 1774.

Most excellent Sir, Sir, Your most humble servant kisses the hand of your Excellency.

DN. HUGO OCONOR.

Most excellent Señor Bailío* Fray Antonio Bucarely y Ursua.

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* Knight commander of the order of Malta.

[Endorsement] Mexico, June 28, 1774, To the Señor Fiscal, together with copies of the letters which were directed to Fathers Santa María and Abad and of their replies. EL BAILIO BUCARELY.

125. THE VICEROY TO FATHER SANTA MARIA Y SILVA, JUNE 8, 1774[47]

I have learned that when your Reverence was engaged in the apostolic office of missionary in the province of Texas, you accompanied Don Atanasio de Mecieres on the expedition which he made to the Nations of the North, from which, it appears, resulted the establishment of peace with some of them; and it being necessary that both concerning this important point as well as concerning other events and incidents of the negotiation and the expedition you should inform me dispassionately and with the proper reserve and secrecy, without revealing to anyone the purport of this communication, although notice of it may be had outside, I beg and entreat your Reverence, that, led by the religious zeal which you profess, and stimulated by the good which may result to the service and even to those natives, you shall send me an exact and detailed report of all the events and occurrences of the said treaty, together with the memorandum or diary which you kept of the observations made in this matter, in order that, in view of everything, the proper resolution may be made. God preserve you many years. Mexico, June 8, 1774.

EL BAILIO FRAY DON ANTONIO BUCARELY Y URSUA.

Reverend Father Fray Miguel de Santa María.

[Endorsement] I certify that this is a copy of the letter sent on the date mentioned to the religious named. Mexico, June 30, 1774. MELCHOR DE PERAMAS.

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[47] *Historia*, vol. 93, f. 145.

126. THE VICEROY TO FATHER ABAD, JUNE 8, 1774[48]

I have learned that at the time when your Reverence was engaged in the apostolic ministry of missionary in the province of Texas you accompanied Don Atanasio de Mecieres on the expedition made by him to the Nations of the North, which resulted in the establishment of peace with some of them; and, it being necessary that both concerning this point and concerning your observations on the expedition your Reverence shall report without prejudice and with the secrecy and reserve necessary in order that the object of this official communication shall be unknown, although notice of it may be had outside, I beg and entreat your Reverence that, animated by your religious zeal, and moved solely by the good which may accrue to the service of God and the king by clearing up all the acts and incidents which happened, you shall send to me an exact and detailed report of everything, describing what you observed in the character of the Indians and what you thought of their promises and their qualities. May God preserve your Reverence many years. Mexico, June 8, 1774.

El Bailio Fray Don Antonio Bucarely y Ursua.
Reverend Father Fray Josef Abad.

[Endorsement] I certify that this is a copy of the letter sent on the date named to the religious mentioned. Mexico, [June?] 31, 1774. Melchor de Peramas.

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127. FRAY JOSE ABAD TO THE VICEROY JUNE 16, 1774[49]

Most excellent Sir: Having noted the contents of the superior order which I have just received from your Excellency, I must inform you, attentive and circumspect Sir, that in order that I may do as you desire, the consent and order of my prelate is necessary. But since he is very much in sympathy with your Excellency's slightest suggestion, I expect, through him, to have the honor and consolation of giving humble, submissive, and prompt obedience to whatever may be to the most exact service of your Excellency. And I beg the divine Majesty to prosper and preserve your most important person many years. Guadalupe, June 16, 1774.

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[48] *Historia*, vol. 93, f. 145.

[49] —*Ibid.*, f. 146.

Most excellent Señor: your most humble servant and chaplain is at your Excellency's feet. FRAY JOSEF ABAD.

Most excellent Señor Bailio Fray Don Antonio Bucarrely y Ursua.

128. FRAY MIGUEL SANTA MARIA Y SILVA TO THE VICEROY, JUNE 17, 1774[80]

MOST EXCELLENT SEÑOR: Attentive to your Excellency's letter, and having taken due note of its contents, I must (trusting to your great prudence) make known to your highness that as I am, by the grace of God our Lord, a religious, I am without control of my own actions, and likewise without recourse or power, on account of my profession, to observe as I ought the reserve which your Excellency in your letter imposes upon me. Therefore I humbly beg your highness to do one of two things: either open the door which locks me in, or, as absolute master of the keys of our wishes, order my prelate, reserving the subject to your self, to give the permission which, according to my profession, as a religious, is so necessary for my due success. I believe from the humble obedience of my prelate to your superior orders that upon seeing them he will obey at once most submissively.

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[80] *Historia*, vol. 93, f. 147.

College of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe of the city of Zacatecas, June 17, 1774. Most excellent Señor, I kiss your Excellency's hand. Your most humble servant, who desires that your important health may be preserved. FRAY MIGUEL SANTA MARIA.

Most excellent Señor Bailio Fray Don Antonio Bucarely y Ursua.

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129. THE BARON DE RIPPERDA TO THE VICEROY
JUNE 28, 1774[81]

MOST EXCELLENT SIR: The reprimand which your Excellency was pleased to give me under date of the eighth of the past month, as respected as it is severe, leaves me as confused and ashamed as might be expected, considering the efforts which for thirty-three years I have made to fulfill my duty to both majesties, and my innocence of the false charges which your highness, whom I so much respect, has heard. For it would be very strange for me to depart in the least from your precepts or to cause doubt thereby of the subordination which in the highest degree I show to the commandant-inspector, to whom I have reported in a prolix diary, now sent in duplicate, everything happening since the time when he asked me for it, even to the limits of self abasement; and I have put into practice what the adjutant-inspector, Don Roque de Medina, was pleased to order in this presidio, although not in the name of that chief, contenting myself with asking him in writing if he ought to rule the province while I was in it, for I did not wish that there should be delays in the service. All this was done with the desire to give your Excellency the pleasure which, to my disgrace, has not resulted. For the very best reasons I ought to observe your precepts, and I do inviolably observe as such your slightest suggestion. For the charges are true only in so far as they report to your respected Highness, first, the carelessness shown by the guard of the horseherd when the Comanches ran off with more than two hundred head of its horses (although not selected ones) because of my lack of subalterns to aid me in carrying out my orders and to punish their infraction, for which reason and for not having overtaken the horseherd, as the corporal under whose charge it was, might have done, I took from him the squadron while on the march, he deserting it on the way and returning with the adjutant-inspector whom he met on the Rio Grande road; and second, in that upon my coming here the most excellent predecessor of your Excellency granted me one hundred fusils and munitions for this settlement.

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[81] *Historia*, vol. 93, f. 163.

For the rest, since it is all plain calumny, I beg your Excellency to deal with me justly, ordering that all the charges against me be proved. But they cannot be proved without falsification, therefore I am sure that God will be on my side.

And knowing it to be so important for his service as well as for the king's that no change be made for the present with respect to the peace with the nations who keep it, or to the effect that the Frenchmen shall leave this presidio; and since I desire to fulfill your Excellency's will in the matter, I hope you may be pleased to suspend the order until, in view of my respectful representation, you may decide what you think best. For if your Excellency orders me not to maintain the peace with the Indians under the former circumstances, it is because you think that I treat as friends those who molest us, whereas it is patent to everybody that I have not treated as friend a single Comanche since the last time they came to ask it, nearly three years ago, with Don Atanacio de Mecieres and the friendly nations of the Taouyas, Ouichitas, Taoucanes, Yscanes, and Quitseigns, who promised peace in the name of the Tancaoues, who until the present year did not come to ratify it. None of them were Comanches, and up to the present all of them have kept their promise with a strictness worthy of admiration, at the same time that the Comanche nation has continued the war which affords them more profit than peace because they do not communicate with Natchitoches.

From that place only three Frenchmen have come in my time to this settlement, of whom I keep one at my own expense as interpreter of the Taouayas and Texa languages, which is indispensable to the maintenance of the peace. The commendable talents which up to now he has exhibited might be envied by those who here consider themselves his superiors; and he has employed himself in nothing but the said occupations in the interest of the service. Another came with the Tancaoues; he works at the shoemaker's trade. The third, who came with Don Atanasio Demecieres asked permission to return, which he did upon getting permission. The first two likewise presented a permit from the commandant of that post. There are also several who have been settled here many years, and who are among the most useful, industrious and quiet citizens, taking no part whatever in the trade with Natchitoches or with the nations. Of the traders with the latter only two have come here. One of them, escorted by three Taouayas, brought a letter from the commandant of Nachitoches, advising me of a report of Englishmen on the coast. The other came recently by order of the same commandant accompanying the Aaraname who on the way back fled, fearful at hearing the soldiers make their accustomed and evil threats that he would be hanged, to disaffect them, as is their custom. These Frenchmen presented the customary passports which all the traders of the friendly nations have, containing admonition to watch over the conduct of the Indians toward us, giving them to understand that we citizens of San Antonio and Nachitoches are of the same nation, and prohibiting them from trading in horses with the Indians. Neither they nor others have taken part in any commerce.

And it must be confessed that, doubtless, the peace of said nations would not be stable except through their trade with La Luisiana, for they are not interested in us except to make war and steal our horseherds, as is proved by the Comanches, who have no trade with Luisiana to restrain them. And Don Atanasio Demeciers having returned to Nachitoches honored by the courts of Madrid and Paris, he has called all the chiefs of the friendly nations. I will cut off communication with him, so far as pertains to me, but I hope that your Excellency will permit him to write to me, or to send someone to cultivate the friendly nations, or to attend to other matters which may arise of interest to the royal service (the only ones which have ever been treated of), in order that I may not be under the necessity of replying to you that I have failed to comply with your superior order to expel them from the presidio, a measure for whose serious results I will not answer, for it would be serious if the friendly nations should observe any breach between us and Nachitoches.

These men are so far from being veterans that the troops would be such only if they had officers, as events prove. The whole force amounts to four hundred, half unarmed, and the greater part of inferior quality.

From these facts it comes that, preferring the service of both majesties and the good of the province in my care, I would very gladly sacrifice my person if God should permit that the misrepresentations should succeed. But this cannot easily happen, in view of the upright and Christian discernment of your Excellency, to whom I give my respects, desirous to employ myself in whatever may most please you, and that our Lord may preserve your most excellent person many years. San Antonio de Bejar, June 28, 1774. Most excellent Sir, Sir, your most respectful and faithful servant kisses your Excellency's hand. EL BARON DE RIPPERDA. Most excellent Señor Bailío Fray Don Antonio Bucarely y Ursua.

Summary

Having for thirty-three years devoted myself to the services of both majesties, being innocent of the charges made against me, and having fulfilled your Excellency's orders, I am confounded and ashamed at your serious reprimand. I have shown blind subordination to the commandant-inspector, reporting everything to him, and obeying to the letter, except to execute in his name, everything the Adjutant-inspector Don Roque de Medina has seen fit to order here, although I have observed with due preference your Excellency's commands; and now I am mortified that there should have reached you a report which is truthful only in so far as I am charged that two hundred or more horses were run off by the Comanches through being neglected by the corporal (who, when I took him from the squadron, deserted, returning with the said Don Roque de Medina) and that one hundred guns and ammunition were granted me by your most excellent predecessor for these citizens. The rest being pure calumny, I ask your Excellency to order it proved.

Since from the force of this presidio a lieutenant and twenty soldiers are in the fort of El Zibolo, there remain only fifty-nine men, including the officers, one of whom is agent, leaving for the service fifty-eight, including an alférez, in name. Therefore, although in poor health, having for over a year been helpless with a dislocated wrist, and for the last four months unable to raise my left arm for the pain, I have this year gone out three times in pursuit of the Indians, twice in a hurry to a distance of seven or more leagues, and the last time for three days, though we did not overtake them on account of the weakness of the horses.

Of citizens fifteen years old and over and able to bear arms there are a few less than three hundred, the greater part being of inferior quality and not even fit for scouting expeditions of a day. And when requested of the alcaldes, since last year rarely have they complied, though few have been asked for; nor in my time has the number for scouting at more than three times exceeded twenty. To scouting they make continual objections, protests, and petitions, the alcaldes being alike lukewarm in requiring them to serve and hostile towards me for requesting them, going to complain to the commandant-inspector and perhaps to you, as I believe also do the reverend fathers ministers of these five missions. The latter present to me grave and legitimate objections and the injury which they suffer in furnishing me the Indians which I ask for. Since the total number available to go out mounted is at present only seventy, very few would be left for the defense of their pueblos, while they would not be available for any other necessary service. Most of them are without guns and all without ammunition. This I have furnished for many scouting expeditions, in order that charges should not be made against me, giving them part of what is destined for these citizens, of whom there are few who can pay for even their rations.

Meanwhile I hope that you may be pleased not to suspend the important treaty with the nations hitherto friendly, for they are not Comanches, nor expel the French living here, for if the Indians learn of any lack of harmony with Natchitoches they will be sure to be displeased. The independence of the Comanches of that post causes them to continue the war. Don Atanacio de Mecieres having returned from Europe honored by the courts of Madrid and Paris, has called the chiefs of the friendly nations. With him I will cease to correspond, hoping that your Excellency will suspend the order with respect to all matters of the service, which are the only ones of which we have treated. The forces here consist of fifty-eight men, including one called alférez. The citizens fifteen or more years of age number less than three hundred; they have few and poor horses, and greatly resist going out; half of them are without arms, and few are well able to handle them. There are some seventy mission Indians with few arms and no ammunition, making in all four hundred. The soldiers would be veterans if they had officers.

[Endorsement] Mexico, August 2, 1774. File this with my letter which he cites, the representations of the commandant-inspector which originated the matter, and the reserved reports of the missionary fathers, and send all to the Señor Fiscal. EL BAILIO BUCARELY.

130. ARECHE TO THE VICEROY [DICTAMEN FISCAL] JULY 2, 1774[52]

MOST EXCELLENT SIR: In order to take the reserved report or instruction indicated in this official communication, the Señor commandant-inspector of the new line of presidios in the Provincias Internas, Don Hugo O'Conor, was pleased to send to your Excellency those which come in the form of certified copies with this *expediente* addressed to the Reverend Fathers Fray Jose Abad and Fray Miguel de Santa Maria, both of the Franciscan Apostolic College of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de Zacatecas. These official communications being received by these religious, they reply to you in their communications of the sixteenth and seventeenth of last month that they cannot make the report and do the other things which are asked of them, without first securing permission from their prelate, considering the strictness of their holy order in this matter, which permission they will obtain as soon as your Excellency is pleased thus to order the very reverend and devoted father guardian. The second of these missionaries adds that your Excellency may give the order in this form, reserving or omitting to state the subject. The Señor Commandant so requests it, and even wishes that these two religious should be called to this capital without making known the purpose to their superior or to any other person. But your Excellency considered it just as well to write to them in the way indicated in said official communications, since it is not so urgent as to require that they should leave their cloisters to make the desired reports with respect to the purpose, object, and other matters which they observed in the expedition of Don Atanasio de Mecieres.

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[52] *Historia*, vol. 93, f. 143.

With this in view, your Excellency will be pleased to resolve that an official communication be directed to the very reverend and devoted father guardian of the college, asking and charging that he immediately give his license and permission to the reverend fathers Abad and Santa Maria to report on a secret matter, which they are asked to do for the service of the king, and that he shall not in any way require them to reveal the secret.

This order being given, two others shall be sent to these religious, in the regular terms and with the proper admonitions, as contained in the former ones, regarding secrecy, reserve, indifference, and rectitude (on account of which, perhaps, they did not request permission of their guardian), telling them that on the same date the appropriate order is being sent to their superior, in view of what they answered in their communications of the sixteenth and seventeenth of last month, relative to not being able to report without his license, and that now they shall do so with all promptitude and without omitting anything they may wish to report in the matter with respect to which they are questioned. Mexico, July 2, 1774. ARECHE.

[Endorsement] Mexico, July 4, 1774: As the Señor Fiscal suggests in all respects. EL BAILIO BUCARELY.

131. FRAY BUENAVENTURA ANTONIO RUIZ DE ESPARZA TO THE VICEROY, JULY 15, 1774[58]

MOST EXCELLENT SIR: Having seen the superior order of your Excellency which you deigned to give me in your letter of the sixth of the present month, I went at once to the cells of Fathers Fray Josef Abad and Fray Miguel de Santa Maria and informed them that they had my permission to report to your Excellency on the matter regarding which you made a request of them, without demanding in any way, as your Highness orders me, that they should disclose the subject to me. I inform your Excellency of this in order that you may be apprised of my humble willingness and promptitude in executing your superior mandates.

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[58] *Historia*, vol. 93, f. 147.

May God preserve the important life of your Excellency the many years which we need. College of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de Zacatecas, July 15, 1774.

Most excellent Sir, your hand is kissed by your most useless servant, who desires to please you.

FRAY BUENAVENTURA ANTONIO RUIZ DE ESPARZA,
Guardian.

Most excellent Señor Bailio Fray Don Antonio Bucarely y Ursua.

132. FRAY JOSE ABAD TO THE VICEROY, JULY 15, 1774[54]

Having seen your Excellency's second letter, dated the sixth of the current month, which treats of the same subject as the former, dated June 8th, and conforming strictly to what your Lordship therein orders me, I have to say that, being missionary of the mission of Espiritu Santo de la Bahia in the year of 1772, just as I was requesting permission of my president to go among the Nations of the North to attempt the reduction of the Aranames, apostates from my mission, Atanasio de Mecieres, who was coming from a visit to some of the nations mentioned, arrived at the presidio of San Antonio. A few days after the arrival of this gentleman I received a letter from the governor of the province himself and one from my president. All three encouraged me to hope for the success of my plan through the opportunity which offered to go in company with Dn. Atanasio, my beloved *compadre*,[55] to the very nations where the Aranames were staying, with whom the gentleman had already been, and to return whither with me he had given his promise. On hearing this good news, I set out for the presidio of San Antonio, whence, in the good company of the gentleman named, I departed on the undertaking. We traveled eight days together, when he heard news from his home, the nature of which I do not know. Informing me that his presence there was necessary, he left me with two Frenchmen and three Spanish soldiers. With this party, and in the name of the Lord, I went ardently to my glorious conquest, and by the divine aid, and with the security of the peace which was said to be established, I arrived with very little fear among the said barbarian nations. Eight days I remained among them under some boughs, performing ceremonies on a portable altar with as much quiet and satisfaction as in my monastery. During this time I used every means possible with the apostates, and begged the chiefs to allow or persuade them to go with me to their mission; but seeing that the desired result was in no way obtainable, I retired to the mission of the Nacoazdoches, whence I reported to the governor and my president to the above effect, and asked their permission to go in person to inform the governor of New Orleans of the scandalous trade, which I had observed in those days, between New France and those nations, sole cause of the complete perdition of those souls and of the destruction of the province. The reply was that I should return to my place, the governor saying to me that it would not be well suddenly to stop the trade. I thought, though I do not know it for certain, that the governor was implicated in the communication of Mecieres [with the tribes], who, as one of the principal agents, has notoriously encouraged the trade, assuring them through it and the trade of the Spaniards all their goods and interests. Thus it was necessary for me to abandon the undertaking, with no other hope than to leave the matter in the hands of Him who is all-powerful and who determines all.

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[54] *Historia*, vol. 93, f. 148.

[55] The father and the god-father of a child call each other *compadre*. De Mézières used the term in the salutation of a letter to Fray Abad on November 28, 1758.

This, most excellent Sir, is all that I am able to say, except to add that I did not accompany the said gentleman on his visit [of 1770]; but since that time or since those pretended treaties there has been no cessation of the murders, robberies, and other insults which almost all the nations, allied with, and instructed by these apostate Aranames, who have done enormous damage, are accustomed to perpetrate upon the Spaniards. Although it would have been possible, no provision has been made to reduce them or to restrain the insolence and the secession of the idolators, for which there is no remedy except to suppress for them the trade in question. As nothing further with respect to the matter occurs to me, I place myself strictly at your Excellency's feet. May God my Lord preserve the life of your Excellency as long as possible. College of Guadalupe, July fifteenth, one thousand, seven hundred seventy-four. Most excellent Sir, your most humble servant is at your Excellency's feet. FR. JPH. ABAD.

133. FRAY MIGUEL SANTA MARIA Y SILVA TO THE VICEROY, JULY 21, 1774[88]

MOST EXCELLENT SIR: Attentive to the letters dated June 8 and July 6 of the present year which your Excellency's magnificence addressed to me, moved by your well known zeal, efficient charity, and ardent wish to observe the faith and loyalty such as should shine in such a breast as that of your Excellency, like another sun which, leaving the darkness confused and ashamed, liberally reveals to even the humblest and smallest the beauty of its rays and the brightness of its paths, in order that by its light they may travel fearlessly in the straight way to their true destiny, which is the Lady Truth, daughter of God and mistress and director of a government, as is notorious – to that[57] of your Excellency comes this humble and unimportant being, humbly and gladly obeying its royal orders and very Christian precepts, if not as I would wish (since the diary was burned, and knowing my very nothingness, and in consequence my uselessness), at least as best my uselessness can, telling with sincere truth what I know, which is the whole substance of the truth[58] and that which gives it life, though it may lack the incidents which adorn it. It is as follows:

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[88] *Historia*, vol. 93, f. 152.

First, I set out on the third or fourth of October[59] of the year 1770 from the presidio of Los Adaes with the commandant of the post of San Juan Bautista de Nachitoches, Don Atanasio de Mecieres, and some other gentlemen, Frenchmen, who accompanied him, the Señor Lieutenant Don Joseph González, now deceased, having furnished me for this purpose[60] the Sergeant Don Domingo Chirinos and four soldiers, whose names are Christobal Carabajal, now deceased, Toribio de la Fuente, Francisco de la Zerda, and Juan Nepomuceno de la Zerda, his brother. There accompanied me also a citizen of the said presidio, called Ygnacio Montes. We arrived the following day at the ranchería of the Adays[61] nation.

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[57] It is not quite clear whether *sol* or *gobierno* is referred to by *al*.

[58] *Verdad* seems to be the antecedent of *la*.

[59] This date gives a clue to the duration of De Mézières's expedition. Since his report of the journey was dated at Natchitoches on October 29, the whole time spent upon it must have been less than four weeks.

[60] It will be noted here that Fray Santa Maria states that the detachment of soldiers was detailed for him, whereas De Mézières makes it appear that they were for himself.

[61] For a brief discussion of the Adaes, see *Handbook of American Indians*, under "Adai." Some of the statements made there are incorrect, and others

Here, most excellent Sir, commenced to take wing now mistrust and now fear of some treason, agents which, giving me strength, moved my uselessness, only four days up from the bed, to ascertain the truth; now with a desire almost apostolic, though unworthy of renown so divine, to save so many souls as were promised to me; now as the most humble and most loyal subject of the Catholic Majesty, may God preserve him, fearful lest the crude entertainment, so full of treason, should serve the Devil at the table of deceit. Therefore, I trust that my discourse will not be lightly regarded by the great prudence of your Excellency, but will cause reflection, and will merit your attention to the following:

When we came in sight of and arrived at the house of the Indian chief of that nation important occurrences were witnessed. Don Atanasio de Mecieres, pallid and colorless in countenance, and the Indian chief, severe, and with signs of emotion, refrained from saluting one another, until I, remembering that in such crises the innocents are the surest means of overreaching the license of sinners, resorted to dissimulation. I got down from my horse and turned to the little Indians, chasing some with tender countenance, embracing others and fondling and kissing those who took my fancy. This action so changed the face of things that all was now pleasure and joy. But I leave to your Lordship to judge how my feelings would be affected, and rely upon your great prudence, which will know whether so unusual an occurrence augurs well for peace, which was many times

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are of questionable validity. Domingo Ramón did not enter the Adaes territory in 1715; the mission of San Miguel was founded in 1717, not in 1716. The post of Nuestra Señora del Pilar de los Adaes was founded in 1722, not "about 1735." There seems to be very slight basis for the assertion that the Atayos mentioned by Cabeza de Vaca were the Adaes. The "14 families of the tribe" at San Antonio about 1802 were the "Adaesaños," Spanish (or Mexican) families who had been removed from Adaes in 1773. See Bolton, *Spanish Abandonment and Reoccupation of East Texas.*

so emphatically promised by the Señor Commandant before setting out from the mission. Indeed, it appears to me, saving a better judgment, that if the Señor Commandant had talked [of the treaty] before, and they had assured him that they would assent to it, neither of these sinister demonstrations would have been made, although the inconstancy of the Indians, most excellent Sir, is unquestioned, as every one who has had experience with them can testify on good grounds. But I think that not on that account will you escape from my mistrust and fear. I pass to the village of the next nation, the Yataci.[62]

At this village or nation, most excellent Sir, we arrived, as I remember, on the third day. Our lodging was in the house of a Frenchman, a merchant here. I did not notice in the chief and the other Indians any special attitude toward me and the rest of the Spaniards, and I therefore remained undecided in the matter. On the following day I set out with the Señor Commandant, the chief of this nation now accompanying us, for the next nation, called the Piticado.[63]

Here, most excellent Sir, we had the same experience with the Indian chief and his people, noticing much friendliness in these latter for the Frenchmen, and for me and the Spaniards an indifference which I cannot express. On the following day I continued my route from here with the same retinue, for the next nation, which is called the Cadodachos.

At this village, most excellent Sir, we arrived on Friday, the twelfth of October of the same year, 1770, the day on which is held the feast of Maria Santissima del Pilar. To insure success, very early in the morning I had prepared a little altar in the field, and performed the holy sacrament of the mass. About two or three in the afternoon we finally reached the village named. Our lodging-place was the house of some other Frenchmen, which I heard said had been in former times a fort in which was maintained a picket of French soldiers. Whether this is true or not I do not know. From this day to Sunday morning, most excellent Sir, it happens that my scene is laid in a theater of comedies, in which a single person plays several rôles at first sight seriously incompatible. Because of the changes in the countenances of the Señor Commandant and his people, at which I marvelled, and of the fear or suspicion [which I witnessed] in ours, I was unable to find place in my breast for either hope or fear. There was no place for the first because of the signs which increased my suspicions; for the other much less, because, as the grandeur of your Excellency knows, in a sick person hope is the last to die. Well, Sunday morning came, when, having made another little altar near this house or old fort, and having erected a holy cross of good size and made by the hand of a carpenter, one of these unhappy Frenchmen, who live among those barbarians, in order that the sacred standard of our redemption might remain raised there, I performed the holy sacrament of mass. This over, we all departed, guided by the Señor commandant to the house of the chief of this village, who awaited us with all of the Indian people, together with the chiefs of other tribes, as follows: two Quichays, one Thahuacana, one Tancagua or Taguayas (as to this I am uncertain), and the rest of the chiefs mentioned. The conflict now began at once. An old Frenchman called Aleci [Grapé], a trader in that pueblo, served as interpreter, another interpreter, sometimes called the Mulatto and sometimes Chano Duro, talking at times. In fine, most excellent Sir, this alternation[64] endured the entire morning, from half past six or seven to one or two in the afternoon. What one said to another I am not able to report to your Excellency with certainty, this being the first time those tongues had reached my ears. But what I saw and noted was the following: The countenance of the said gentleman was at times very dark with signs of wrath, and again showed great anxiety and affliction. The pipe, which is the chief symbol and the surest sign by which these people signify peace and show the tranquillity and love of their hearts, was passed all the morning.[65] Many times it was given to the Señor Commandant, Don Atanasio Mecieres, and his men, I and our men being left out of consideration, although I was at the side of the Señor Commandant and our men were next to the Frenchmen. Finally, seeing the Señor Commandant give his hand to these chiefs, and it appearing to me that the desired end had been accomplished, I went very gladly to make the same demonstration, at which Don Atanacio instantly stopped me, saying that I should not do so. At the end of the meeting he left at once and I followed him with our men to the house, or old fort, which was our lodging place. Here, most excellent Sir, troubled, in suspense, and afflicted at the sight of these demonstrations, I asked him how our business was coming on, to which the angry reply was, "There is no other way for it, Reverend Father, but for Don Hugo Oconor to come and put an end to them with fire and blood."[66] This, most excellent Sir, is the actual truth and whole substance of everything. With this result the Señor Commandant promptly ended his journey, our men doing the same in a great hurry and full of fear. They went, in short, to find their horses. Mine had disappeared. I do not know whether the Indians had stolen it or whether it was that the fear which made cowards of our men gave them no opportunity, I mean permission, to search for it. Seeing now the preparation for a speedy departure, I decided, under the circumstances, to make the return trip in a canoe which the Señor Commandant bought, or which they gave to him.

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[62] For the Yatasi, see *Handbook of American Indians*, Part ii. See also *Memorias de Nueva España*, vol. xxvii, 188; Pénicaut, "Relation," in Margry, *Découvertes et Etablissements*, vol. v, 563-565; Espinosa, *Chrónica Apostólica*, 443; La Harpe, in French, *Hist. Coll. La.*, vol. iii, 19; Kerlérec, in *Jour. Soc. Américainistes*, 1906, p. 72; Letter of Macarty to the governor of Texas, Nov. 17, 1763 (Ms.).

[63] This tribe is mentioned under this name in a report made in 1785 by a Spanish official at New Orleans [Ms. in the Bancroft Collection].

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[64] The author evidently means the alternation between de Mézières and the Indian speakers and not between Alexi and Chano Duro.

[65] It will be noted that the declarations of the soldiers at Los Adaes, *Document* 8, do not mention the passing of the peace pipe as among the occurrences during the conference.

This, most excellent Sir, is what happened. But as it is necessary for the ease of my conscience and the due fulfillment of the royal precept or command of your Excellency, not to leave unmentioned anything which my eyes saw on that journey, if your Excellency will give me his attention I will relate what I remember, which is the following:

In this village of the Cadodachos I saw Monsieur Alexi supplying it with powder and balls.

Likewise the French carpenter, so unchristian that a son of his, who was with me, apparently about fourteen or fifteen years old, had not yet been baptized; and even worse than this, he had in his house five captive Indian women, of various nations, on seeing whom Don Atanasio, surprised and with signs of anger, told me that this Frenchman kept them for the infamous traffic of the flesh. Grieved at their perdition and moved to compassion, I made attempts to rescue them, weeping at the toil of these unhappy souls and at such cruel captivity; but I had to content myself that, as a result of my supplications, the said commandant, Don Atanacio, should order to depart with me in the canoe another old Frenchman, who appeared to be over seventy years old, and who had, as he himself said, been thirty years among those barbarians, living like them.

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[66] See volume I, *footnote* 153 for a passage reflecting the reputation of O'Conor.

Likewise, [I must mention] the herds, both of horses and mules, which wept not only at their captivity, but also at the murders of the poor Spaniards, their masters, deeds which are so notorious in the assaults which they make.

Finally, most excellent Sir, I embarked on the river of the said village [Cadodachos] for the return to our mission. On the way I met a very large canoe well filled with munitions and supplies of war, such as guns, powder, and balls, which they were taking from Natchitoches to the already-mentioned Alexi. And lastly, having journeyed eight days, as I have related to your Excellency's magnificence, and being oppressed by hunger, we were forced to land in the village of Piticado, for the purpose of getting succor.

What happened here, most excellent Sir, will be incredible to your Excellency's magnificence. Having directed my steps to the house of the French trader of this village and made known my need, the reply which he gave me was, "Dn. Atanasio Mecieres did not leave us orders to give your Reverence anything." Hereupon, remembering the promise of Jesus Christ, the supreme good, to my seraphic father, that we should not lack His divine pity, I departed with the young man who accompanied me, the same Ygnacio Montes mentioned above, a servant whom I took from the mission. Here, most excellent Sir, I need the attention of your Excellency's magnificence, so that you may praise the mercy of God our Lord. I entered the house of the Indian chief who received me benevolently, and on the instant that he learned of my need promptly ordered brought a jar of *atole* and *tamales*[67] and that the Indian woman, his wife, should set to work promptly to supply me. And not content with this action, so heroic and so worthy of eternal remembrance, on the following day he gave me a horse and a guide to the next village, the above-mentioned Yatazi. But before setting out from this village, most excellent Sir, I can do no less than relate to your magnificence my experience the night before in the house of the said Frenchman, namely, that he retired in my sight with an Apachi Indian woman, although she was so near parturition that I prayed to God our Lord that she might be delivered that night in order that I might save the child.

Finally, on the next day I set out with the guide mentioned for Yatazi. Here, most excellent Sir, shortly before arriving at the village, I met the Indian chief in a field tent which they make of hides or skins of the deer which they kill. It was so small that there was scarcely room in it for a bench of reeds with a buffalo [hide], which was his bed. There was another little tent where he had the fire, which this people are never without. I arrived at night when it was raining, and was all wet, for it had rained the whole day. This Indian arising on the instant, took me down from the horse, and ordered the

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[67] *Atole* is a gruel-like drink, made by boiling pounded maize in water or in milk and sweetened. It is much used in Mexico today, and was found in use among the natives of Mexico and the southern part of the United States at the time of the conquest. A *tamal* is an article of food made of the meal of maize stuffed with meat and boiled in the husks of maize. They are sometimes highly seasoned with peppers and at other times sweetened and stuffed with raisins.

Indian woman, his wife, to get up from the bed where she had already retired with her little daughter, who was very ill, and very tenderly and charitably made me retire in it; and I had no power to resist, being surprised and confused at seeing an action so heroic in a heathen Indian. For if in a Christian who has knowledge of God it should be worthy of praise, if seen in a heathen, I think, most excellent Sir, that the tongue is incompetent, words inexpressive, and any sort of admiration inadequate.

But as I suffered much inconvenience and was quite weary, it being cold, and the cries of the little Indian girl being loud and continuous, either because of the illness from which she suffered, or because the coverlet, or buffalo skin, which had covered her, was smaller than before, I was forced to arise in spite of the hospitality of the Indian. And when I went to the fire, making the gesture of warming myself, he began to ask me about the sacred image which he had seen in the altar when I had performed the holy sacrament of mass, as I have related above. Not understanding what he said, since it was the first time I had heard those languages, as I have also said above, and seeing at the same time the great distress and affliction of the Indian chief at my failure to understand, I called the young man, the servant who accompanied me, since he understood the language to some extent. He talked with the Indian, who repeated the same question; and when the young man informed me, full of pleasure and satisfaction with the opportune occasion which God had brought to my hands, I told him to reply that that divine image was the image of the mother of help and of the religion of all human kind. In short, I explained everything to him in a way that the young man could express and he understand. And, most excellent Sir, as soon as the young man had told him what I have explained, our Indian, raising his eyes to heaven, his countenance grief-stricken, and making signs of great pain in his breast, broke forth in his own language with these words: "If the French do not tell us these things, we poor creatures will know nothing. Frenchman only Cambalachi, Cambalachy." This word "cambalachy," most excellent Sir, means commerce or trade. I diverted myself the rest of the night in this place, and as the rain continued all next day, about three or four o'clock I was obliged to set out for the village named, with another Indian, a son-in-law of this chief, who, I think, must have had orders to treat me as the chief had done, for I experienced from him the same kind of conduct.

I did not arrive at the village until about eight o'clock at night because of the heavy rain which broke loose a short time after I set out, and because of the heaviness of the mud. The Indians welcomed me very gladly. After I had been with them a short time I learned that there was a very sick Indian woman there. She had the happiness to receive the holy water of baptism, and I the good fortune to administer it to her, at which both her relatives and the rest of the Indians showed great enjoyment and pleasure.

Finally, most excellent Sir, I set out from this village, the Indians attending me as at the former one, the son-in-law of the Indian chief already mentioned serving me as guide until I entered my mission. Since it is not necessary for my purpose to relate the labors which I suffered on this part of the journey because of the great amount of rain, I omit an account of them, both in order not to further molest the attention of your Excellency's magnificence, and because I consider an account of them superfluous.

This, most excellent Sir, is the clear and plain truth with respect to everything which occurred to me on this journey, there being nothing to subtract and nothing to add except what I have forgotten or have thought well to omit as not pertinent to the substance of the truth, which your Excellency's magnificence commands me in your letters to state. To this, in order to give it greater force, credibility, and constancy, I swear *im berbo sacerdotis tacto pectoris* [*sic*]. Apostolic College of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe of the City of Zacatecas, July 21, 1774.

Most excellent Sir, your most submissive servant and humble chaplain kisses your Excellency's hand.

FR. SANTA MARIA.

Most excellent Señor Bailío Fr. Dn. Antonio Bucarely y Ursua.

134. THE VICEROY TO THE BARON DE RIPPERDA JULY 26, 1775[68]

The two bundles of tobacco which in a letter of March 30 last your Lordship stated you had sent by the line of stations with the proposal of a citizen of Natchitoches to enter into a contract if agreeable to the Direction,[68a] have arrived; and the Direction having replied that it is not agreeable, I report it to your Lordship, repeating that the curtailment of correspondence which I have ordered should not be construed as confined to M. de Mecieres, but as applying to all Frenchmen and citizens of New Orleans, although they may be regarded as subjects of the same sovereign.

May God preserve your Lordship many years. Mexico, July 26, 1775.

BAILIO FRAY JUAN ANTONIO BUCARELY Y URSUA [rubric].

[Endorsement] No reply is necessary.

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[68] Bexar Archives.

[68a] The Dirección del Tabacco.

VI. FRONTIER PROBLEMS, 1774-1777

135. GAIGNARD[69] TO UNZAGA Y AMEZAGA

JANUARY 6, 1774[70]

MONSEIGNEUR: I have the honor to write you the present letter to assure you that I am your very humble servant, and to report to your Lordship that M. de Villier[71] desired to send a person to take a flag to the Naytane nation to have them make peace with the Spaniards of the province of Texas, where they continually steal horses.

M. de Villiere, to whom I have not the honor of being known, proposed that I make this expedition, although at my own expense. By my instructions he has ordered me that I be escorted by the savages of the Panis[72] nation, since the Osages haunt the road, where one runs the risk of being killed. The Panis, whom I have sent for to escort me, have arrived, the chief of the party being the great chief whom M. Demezier appointed.[73] We had a council and after I had harangued the chief he replied that I said the same things to him that M. Demezier had told them; that he adhered firmly to his willing promise that they would be friends of the Spaniards as well as allies of the French; but that he prays your Lordship to have pity on their nation, and to prohibit any hunter or trader from going up the Arkansas River, since [through them] the Osage supply themselves with ammunition to come to make war on the said Panis, whom they kill continually. This will expose them to injuring the French, at which he will be grieved.

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[69] In order to bring together the Gaignard journal and the two letters relating to it, a slight departure from the chronological order has been made here. Gaignard gives some account of himself near the end of this letter. Other data relative to the circumstances of sending him on this mission are given in *Document* 137. See also pages 99-100.

[70] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 189-1, no. 127.

[71] Baltazar de Villiers, lieutenant-governor of Natchitoches during the absence of De Mézières in Europe.

[72] The term Panis, as here used, includes the Taovayas, Wichita, Yscanis, Tawakoni (see page 85). In other words, it is synonymous with Wichita as now used by ethnologists in the general sense. See the "Introduction."

[73] Just when he was appointed does not appear.

I am leaving to go to the Naytanne, and I propose after my mission has been accomplished, to raise a party of Panis to go to make war on the Osage; and if the fortune of war is such that I should have the good luck to get some slaves, I beg your Lordship to please grant me the privilege of selling them to recompense me for the expenses which I am incurring.

If I have not the honor that my name should have come to your Lordship, I am that young man, resident of Opelousas, whom your Lordship promised to honor with the post of captain of militia of the said post of Opelousas.

If I should have the good fortune that your Lordship may still be in the same frame of mind, I mean to secure the commission mentioned by rendering myself useful to the nation, as I shall do always and whenever the occasion presents itself.

I beg your Lordship to please believe me one who has the honor to be, with profound respect, Monseigneur, Your very humble and obedient servant.

J. GAIGNARD [rubric].

Village of the Grand Cadaux, January 6, 1774.

136. JOURNAL OF AN EXPEDITION UP THE RED RIVER, 1773-1774;[74] BY J. GAIGNARD

Journal kept exactly according to the orders of M. de Villier to make, with the help of God and the Holy Virgin, the journey to the Panis and the Naytane, begun at Natchitoche on the day of my departure
October first, 1773

On the day of our departure I noticed nothing.

On the third I arrived at Natassee,[75] twenty-five leagues from Natchitoches. There are [only] three warriors, but there is, however, a trader for those going and coming.

On the fifth I entered the great river, after having crossed several lakes and bayous.

On the ninth I arrived at the village of the Petit Cados dagos, who are twenty-five leagues distant from the Natasee. There are sixty warriors. They are friendly with the French.

On the fourteenth I arrived at the Preiry dest Ennemy [Prairie of the Enemy]. There are about ten Cados living in this vicinity.

On the twenty-third I arrived at the village of the Great Cados, who are thirty leagues distant from the Petit Cados. There are ninety warriors. They are brave and employ themselves only at war and in the chase, the women having to tend the crops. They are friendly with the French. They are situated on the banks of the Red River straight west from Natchitoches.[76] During the eighty-four days which I stayed with the Great Cados I observed nothing except that they told me that there was a silver mine twelve leagues from the Cados toward the northeast, and another on the Cayaminchy River,[77] fifty leagues from the Cados toward the northwest.

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[74] Bancroft Coll., Louisiana. Original or autograph copy.

[75] The Yatasi, in the vicinity of Shreveport.

[76] The direction was nearer north than west.

On January sixteenth, 1774, I set out for my destination. I had with me an escort of Panis, for whom I had sent, and who greatly vexed me during the whole route. The Sieur Layssard, the elder son, who was at the Cados, took advantage of my convoy to go to the Panis.

On the twenty-second the Panis began to make me give them booty.

On the twenty-sixth we reached a district which the Osages had just left, taking away a horse belonging to my men.

On the fifth of February we remained in camp. There the Panis obliged me to give them each a Limbourg blanket.

On the tenth we remained in camp. There the chief told me that my associate[78] had told him to take away from me half of the merchandise which I had, since it was his, and that he gave him a little of it; and that to prove to me the veracity of his statement he was going to assemble all of the French and all the French savages to hear the truth. The council being assembled, the chief made him acknowledge it, reproaching him for all the thieveries which he had committed against me on the way, such as that of the Limbourg, which he must have stolen from me at the Cados. I knew that he had stolen it to give to a Panis woman. Finally all the evil words which he gave to the savages, all this came out. This wretch left me some days ago.[79]

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[77] The Kiamichi, or Kiamitia, River, which flows into the Red from the north in Choctaw County, Oklahoma, a short distance west of the 95th meridian. The mouth of the river is something more than one hundred miles above the great bend of the Red.

[78] Sosier.

[79] From this it is clear that the diary was not written up daily, for Sosier

The twelfth we remained in camp. There the Panis, after having failed in their coup two days before, pillaged me and tried to kill me. They stole even my blanket; two days afterward snow fell and I nearly froze.

On the sixteenth we arrived at the village of the Panis.[80] They are situated in a prairie on the bank of the Red River, west of the Cados one hundred leagues.

The name of the nation is Panis. It contains four villages, namely, the Tavoyache, the Ouatchita, the Niscaniche, and the Toyacane. There are in all one thousand warriors. The women are charged with the agriculture. The men do nothing but hunt for a living and engage in war, which they wage with several nations. They are brave, and go to their enemies to steal horses and capture slaves. When they take a slave capable of returning, they broil him and eat him. They are very cruel, and are liars and thieves, the women as well as the men. They have had two field pieces ever since the Spaniards made an expedition there to destroy them.[81]

On the twenty-second I had all the chiefs assemble and we held a council. The great chief spoke first, saying that the French commander had sent him a flag by the Sieur Layssard, to make peace with the Spaniards; that he had him told to hold it firm; and that since they had wished to recognize him as great chief, although old he made peace heartily with the Spaniards; that he would love them like the French; but that it was necessary to make him a small present for his young men. The Sieur Layssard and I did so. I gave eight pounds

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left for Natchitoches on March 1. See page 86. There are other indications pointing to the same conclusion.

[80] Apparently the Taovayas, the principal Wichita village on the river at that time. In 1772 the Wichita tribe proper was on the upper Brazos and Wichita Rivers, while the Tawakoni were farther south. See Volume 1, Map.

[81] Parrilla's expedition of 1759.

of powder and sixteen pounds of shot, twenty-four hunters' knives, tobacco, and other things; then I spoke as follows:

> All you chiefs open well your ears to hear my word, and keep it well in your heads. To-day the French and the Spaniards are only one; thus it is the same mouth which speaks: it is the same heart and the same blood; the Panis must take for their example all the other nations who have made peace with the Spaniards; they all carry the same flag; all the chiefs must have good hearts, and recommend to their youth that they shall not go to steal horses and mules any more among the Spaniards; all the roads must be kept free and white.

They were well content with the harangue which I made them, and made me many promises, which, however, they have not kept, as I experienced by what followed.

On the twenty-eighth I heard that a conspiracy had been formed in the village for two parties to go to make war on the Spaniards of the province of Taixe. I demanded of the chief to know if this was the word and the promise he had given me. They told me that Monsieur De Mezier had promised them that Spaniards would come to them and bring them presents, but that they had seen nothing come and that he was a liar.

I told the great chief to stop those young men, and he did so immediately; but he told me to write to my commander to write to the governor at San Antonio to send presents for stopping the warriors, such as horses, bridles, sabers, and other effects.

On the very next day I sent Sosier to Natchitoches to report this news to Monsieur the commander, taking advantage of this opportunity to retire this miserable fellow from the village, where he had put himself so contrary to my expedition; but unhappily I saw him return.

On the fourth of March there arrived a band which had been separated for a long time.

On the sixth I sent three Naytanes to take my message to the great chief of their nation, giving them a carrot of tobacco for the chief to smoke, that he might come to receive the message and the flag.

On the fourteenth more than four hundred men left to go to reconnoiter a trail of the Osage. On the twenty-second they had an encounter, and killed one of them with my own fusil. The same day that they arrived at the village they brought me the scalp, telling me to pay for the death of that Osage, since they were the enemies of the French as well as of the Panis. I tried to refuse but it was impossible, as I feared ill consequences. The day on which this Osage was killed I just escaped being killed by him, for I was not an arpent from them when they stole the horse, and I heard them.[82]

The third of April two men arrived from the Arkansas River to trade for horses and slaves. This caused much talk.

On the fourth there arrived here three Naytane, coming from war with the Cannecis.[83] They made bad report to the Panis, saying that the Spaniards furnished arms to the Pados.[84] The Panis said that the French betrayed them; that if the peace was really sincere they would see presents come, which would make their hearts content; that M. De Mezier was a liar, in spite of all the good speeches he had made them; and that they wanted booty.

On the eleventh there arrived a chief of the Naytane who came to report to me that the great chief had received the tobacco which I had sent him: that he had smoked with a good heart; that he had sent a morsel of tobacco to each of the chiefs of the other bands, and had told them to come to see the French; that all the chiefs had smoked the tobacco with good hearts, saying that they would not go to war any more against the Spaniards; that their hearts were glad to hear that there was a flag for their nation; that the roads should be free and white; that they would listen to the word of the French; that the great chief had sent me this little slave as a pledge of his word; and that he sent word to me to go to meet him in a designated place.

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[82] From this it would seem that Gaignard went with the Indians, although this is not altogether clear.

[83] The Apache.

[84] It would appear from this passage that the Padoucah and Naytane, two branches of the Comanche, were unfriendly.

I accepted the slave and made a small present. I wished to go to join the Naytane, as my order required, but the chief of the Panis opposed my departure.

On the seventeenth the Naytane chief left to return to his camp. I gave him a carrot of tobacco and a little maize, and had him instructed to carry it to his great chief and tell him to smoke the tobacco with a good heart, and to eat the maize in the same way, and that when he should be nearer I would go to see him.

The chief left very well content. On the same day there arrived eleven Naytane, coming from the band of the Manbaricas,[88] and bringing a friendly message. They were glad to see Frenchmen after eight years had passed without seeing them.[89] I showed them great friendship and they left well content.

On the twenty-fifth a little before eight o'clock at night the Sieur Laysard came to tell me that he had heard that in the morning a war party had left; that it was to go to the Arkancas River to look for French hunters, to pillage them, and that if the French resisted they would kill a Panis, and when the others should come they would kill us. We were very much embarrassed at this news, but I was unable to leave the village on peril of my life, seeing that I was charged with a commission for the king concerning the Naytane; for I knew that it was of interest to the state, and I wished to discharge my commission with honor.

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[88] Ditsakana [the sewers]. According to Mooney, the name had been Widyu [awl], but on the death of a chief of that name it was changed to Ditsakana. They were commonly known as Yamparicas, from their custom of eating the yampa root. Schoolcraft calls them Root-eaters, and Butler the Root-diggers [Mooney, in the *Handbook*, under "Ditsakana"].

[89] This would put the last contact in 1766. In 1768 the Spanish of New Mexico complained that the Jumano, living at the junction of the Arkansas and the Colorado [Canadian?], were supplying the Comanche.

It is very certain that the French are much to be pitied in this village with a nation as savage and brutal as this is. They expose one to hunger, and they regard the French who live in their village as their dogs. Frequently they refuse to sell us food, and one is obliged often to go on an empty stomach; and not having had any maize I can say that I am suffering severely.

On the nineteenth of May, six Frenchmen from the Arkansas River arrived, having come to trade for horses, mules, and slaves.

These Frenchmen had no passport, and I should gladly have executed my order,[87] but all the savages, the chiefs first of all, said they liked the French of the Arkansas River better than those of Natchitoches, since the latter wish nothing but deer skins, which they do not have, while those of the Arkansas River take horses, mules, and slaves, by means of which they get what they need. They are right, and it is certain that to win the hearts of these savages it is necessary:

First, that the government give express orders to the commander of the Arkansas that the trade of the *chasseurs* with the Panis be stopped.

Secondly, that no passports to go to the Panis should be given at Natchitoches except to men capable of inspiring in them good sentiments, and who have permission to trade in horses, mules, and slaves, since they have nothing else. Then they will be content.

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[87] Presumably to arrest contraband traders.

Thirdly, they must be given presents, by all means. It is also necessary for the public welfare that the government be informed of and pay attention to the fact that within a year the Ouacee[88] nation, which lived on the bank of the Misoury, seeing itself abandoned by the French, has come to join the Panis. It is a good nation, and contains six hundred warriors, according to what I am told by the Sieur Layssard, who saw them last spring.

These two nations together form a strong party, and if the government neglects this very important object, not giving them any presents, they might go on a rampage and make war against the Spaniards of the province of Taixe, where they would do much damage.

On the twenty-third the Frenchmen departed with fifty-three horses and mules, which displeased us.

It is not necessary that the French take to the Panis fine goods, only bagatelles being required, since this is an immodest nation and do not wear breeches. They wear only a simple robe and often go naked in summer. Everything which belongs to one belongs to another.

On the twenty-fourth the great chief came and said to me, "Since you have been in my village you have always spoken fair words, and you have good sense; I come to ask you if I have done evil, [if so] I am sorry."

I asked him what was the matter.

He replied that Layssard complained, when his booty was stolen, that he had taken his goods; that Layssard had gone to live with another chief; and that this had angered him, and he had thrown his flag at Layssard's feet.

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[88] The Panis-mahas, or Skidi.

I answered that he had done wrong to throw his flag down, which signified that he regretted his promise of peace; that the Sieur Layssard was not chief, but that it was very annoying to him to see himself robbed without being able to complain to the chief, whose duty it was to keep good order; that if the chiefs of the other nations knew of it they would mock him; and that on the contrary, he must go at once, pick up his flag, and hold it fast and keep it.

The chief replied that I was right, and that he would go and pick it up.

I told him that when a chief received a flag it was very disgraceful in him to give it up without cause, and that his young men would make fun of him.

He replied that I was right, and that my words were just.

On the eleventh of June there arrived a party of Naytane, composed of forty men, who came to see me. I showed great friendship to the chief and he to me. He told me that the great chief had told him to tell me that he had gone to war with the Cannesi, and that as soon as he returned he would come to see me. The next day he went away again, I having told him to have a good heart for the Spaniards.

On the twentieth a chief of the Naytane came to tell me that the great chief had returned from the war; that he had made thirty cabins; and that he would be pleased if I would go to see him where he was. I would have been very glad to do so but the Panis prevented me.

I have been very sorry not to be able to go, because the place where he was is thirteen days' travel from the Panis; and by going from there an equal distance I should be at Santa Fé, whither I would take the Naytane chief to make peace. But God has not wished to give me this pleasure. Certainly my project has been too much crossed in this expedition to be successful.

On the fourteenth a strong party set out to go to make war on the Cannesis. On the way they met their enemy, who killed one of their men, and they gave way. Arriving at the village, they said that the Spaniards had furnished fusils to their enemy, who were all armed. This made a stir in the village.

I replied that the Spaniards had not given arms to the savages in that district, and that if they had them it was because they had killed some nation and taken their arms.

On July first I was very much surprised at the arrival of a Panis who came from Natchitoches and who reported that the commander of Natchitoches[80] had permitted Sausier to return in spite of all that I had written against him, to the effect that he was a man who was injurious to the state on account of his evil talk, as is shown by what follows.

On the morning of the second, as I passed before a cabin, Sieur Layssard joining me, the great chief came out all in a rage, telling us that we were two liars; that Layssard had come to tell him that the French chief had sent for him; that I had said "yes" but that we lied; that Sosier had told him through the man who had come the day before that it was he whom the commander had sent to search for him; that we had lied; that he was seriously thinking of doing us harm, and was very angry.

I replied that we had not lied, that as soon as the letter should arrive I should show him the truth. Fortunately the letter which we received from Monsieur Demezier bore me out. This rogue Sosier had already made us much trouble before arriving at the village. On the second Sieurs Baudaoin and Sosier arrived. Sosier was charged to hand over five thousand seven hundred livres of merchandise, according to the letter of advice which he gave me, but he kept it. And in spite of the robbery he came to seek a quarrel with me. He even took me by the neck, apparently with the design of killing me, but I was the stronger. The chiefs were very much annoyed at the scandal caused by the wretch in the village.

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[80] De Mézières was now in charge at Natchitoches, having returned from Europe in February, and taken possession at Natchitoches in March. See *Documents* 138, 140.

Through Sieur Baudoin Monsieur Demezier wrote me that I had done right to stop the two war parties, that it was always necessary to keep in mind the service of the king, and have speeches made. There was no need of giving me this advice, for I have had nothing more at heart than the service of my king, God save him, and have paid for having harangues made in favor of the Spaniards. The Naytane chief, seeing that I could not go to find him, came with the whole nation. He arrived on the third at the village of the Tavoyache. I had all the chiefs and the Frenchmen assemble to hold council, and witnessed the signing of the peace and the pledge, as follows [at this point in the original there is a symbolic drawing in colors].

After having arranged this in the presence of the chief I spoke as follows:

> I came here to bring a message from my chief and a flag for the great chief of the Naytane; may he open well his ears to hear what I am about to say to him.
>
> For a long time you have known the French, and have known that they have always had their hearts open for the Naytanes. Now to-day the Spaniards and the French are one. It is the same mouth that speaks; the same heart and the same blood. It is necessary, then, that the chief firmly grasp the hand of the

Spaniard; that he absolutely forbid the young men to make war on the Spaniard; and that they give up the bad habit which they have of going to steal horses and mules.

This flag is a sign of peace; that Limbourg blanket is to cover the blood which has been shed on the roads, and to make them white and clean.

These knives are to stop up the crooked trail, for it is necessary that all nations should travel by the same roads, straight and free. This tobacco is to be smoked by the young men, so that the war may be at an end. The Spaniards, seeing that the Naytane will be peaceful, will have their hearts open for them, as they have for all the nations who have made peace with them. Look! In all the villages you see everywhere the same flag. They all grasp their hands in order that the war may be at an end, for the Spaniards are powerful enough to avenge themselves for the evil which you do to them, but they have good hearts.

The chief replied that he was charmed to have the flag to facilitate going among the Spaniards;[80] that he was going to place it over his cabin, that all the Naytanes might see it; and that with the speech which he was going to make, peace would be assured; that if any Naytane were to go to make war on the Spaniards, they were not of that band; that there were three bad men who stole horses from among the Toicanne, the Panis, and the Spaniards; but that he was going to condemn it forcibly and that it would stop; and that the whole nation had promised him to keep the peace.

All the nations appeared pleased to have the flag.

The Naytane are a good nation, and are not cruel. They are numerous, and comprise fully four thousand warriors. They are divided into four bands which are never together. This is the only time that I have seen them all assembled in one place. They are fine men and great fighters. In case the slaves which they capture are grown up, they kill them immediately. They have no fixed village, but are wanderers, following wild animals for a living.

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[80] That is, they would carry it as a sign of frindship, and under its protection enter the settlements.

The country where they live is without timber, and consists of immense prairies. The men and women go dressed in tanned skins of antelope,[91] an animal very common in that country. The commerce of the Naytane consists in slaves and cattle hides,[92] which they exchange for tobacco, knives, axes, and glass beads. They trade only in trifles.

On the fifth I was with Sieur Baudoin when he told the great chief of the Panis to have all the chiefs assemble to hear the reading of a letter which M. Demezier had written to him.

The chief replied that he had no need of a letter, that he wanted the booty which Monsieur Demezier had promised; that Sosier was not hardhearted, but cut off Limbourg and gave it to the Panis.

On the ninth the Sieur Layssard and I arranged to have the chiefs assemble; we held a council, and I had the letter addressed to the chief read and interpreted to him.

The great chief replied that he would go to Natchitoches, but that Sosier was not hardhearted. No harangue was made regarding the letter of Monsieur Demezier. It is clear that Sosier could well afford to give booty, since he came to raise a revolt against me. This man was very injurious in that nation.

Sieur Baudoin, not knowing that I had written the commander of Natchitoches not to permit Sosier to return, reproached me, but I told him that I had sent him in order that he should never return. The Sieur Laysseu[93] said the same.

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[91] *Cabrite.*

[92] That is, buffalo hides.

[93] Apparently Layssard.

Being annoyed by the evil talk which Sosier made every day to the Panis, which was prejudicial both to the state and to all the French in the village, the Sieur Layssard and I decided to leave and to go and give a report of our mission.

On the twenty-sixth I sent my interpreter to ask the great chief if he wished to come to see Monsieur Demezier,[94] saying that the Sieur Layssard and I were about to leave and that he had always had confidence in me since I had been in his village; that we had always been friendly. Consequently he told me that he would come to see Monsieur Demezier and that he had his heart open for him.

My interpreter came to me to say that the great chief consented to come with us; I engaged the interpreter to come also. He is a savage of that nation who has been a slave, and who has rendered me good service during the expedition.[95]

On the night of the seventh of August, the Naytanes being camped a league from the village of the Panis, five Naytane arrived coming from Saint Antoine. They said that the Spaniards had surprised them stealing horses and had killed five of their comrades. All the village began to weep.

The great chief spoke, saying that the Spaniards had done right to kill them, since they had given their word to keep the peace; that they were dead dogs; that they had refused to listen to him; that they had stolen; that the weeping should cease immediately; and indeed the weeping did cease immediately. In fact, he is a respected chief and is not like [that of] the Panis.

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[94] After De Mézières returned from Europe he called the chiefs of the principal tribes to visit him.

[95] He may have been San Yago, who went to New Orleans in 1770. See *Document* 9.

It will be necessary, as I have said, that the government, for the good of the peace of the republic, shall prevent the hostilities which might be committed against it; soon it will be necessary for this purpose even to have in the village of the Toicanne[96] and the Anamas, who have united, a trader, who, being established in the center of the nations of this district, should be obligated to go to see the Panis and Naytane every year and inspire in them good sentiments. I know no person suitable to be put in this village except the Sieur Layssard, the elder son; he knows their language and the Anamas[97] love him greatly, as also do the Toicanne, for as he has lived three years with them he ought to know them; and with the aid of the government he would infallibly have good success, just as in the service of the king I had good success in my expedition. It is only in my private affairs that I had ill success.

The Sieur Layssard and I not having any servants, mine having left me at the advice of Sosier, we decided to take advantage of the convoy which was going to the Toicanne a hundred leagues distant from the Panis,[98] whence we should make our way to the Natchitoches. I therefore engaged the interpreter to help me take my effects.

On the fourteenth of the month of August, therefore, I left the village of the Panis with Sieur Layssard. I left without regret this nation where I had experienced misery and trouble for six months, thanking God and the Holy Virgin for having spared my life.

It is true that everything that the Panis did to me was done only at the instigation of De Sosier.

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[96] See *Handbook*, part ii, 702, for a suggestion regarding the origin of the name "Three Canes" as applied to this tribe.

[97] The Xaraname or Araname.

[98] Presumably to trade.

I had thought therefore to be rid of them, but by a fatal mishap I was obliged to return the same day. The chief, being with me and my interpreter about a league from the village, caused me to change my route. After having crossed a wood we arrived at a small prairie where we saw at a distance the convoy with the Sieur Layssard. The chief left us and went to join them. We followed. Again we had to go across the wood without a path. My interpreter seeing that he was lost, attempted, without saying a word to me, to detach his horse from my band that he might return to the village. But perceiving this, I begged him not to abandon me in a place where I should perish, but the man made me no answer. I broke forth in tears,[99] and commended myself to God and the Most Holy Virgin. That man left me, saying that we were exposed in the enemy's country, we two alone, and that it was necessary to return to the village. At this I found myself in a sad situation.

In spite of all the arguments which I made him, it was necessary for me to return to the village, where I arrived at night. I shall be unable to tell of the sad night which I spent, filled with sorrow, and feverish from the fatigue of my day.

On the next day I reflected about what was to become of me. There was no way to find a servant anywhere. I therefore decided to leave my effects in the hands of Sieur Baudoin. Even if I had had a hundred thousand livres I should have abandoned it all in view of my sorrow. I took advantage of a convoy which was going to the Cados; as it had already started, I joined them on the way. On the sixteenth, then, I set out to come to the Cados, where I arrived on the twenty-eighth.

I can say that during all the ten years since I began to frequent the savages I have dealt with several nations, and I know them all to have the same manners.

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[99] Gaignard does not at any point inspire great admiration on the ground of fortitude.

I remained at Grand Cados to rest until the twelfth of November, when I set out for Natchitoches, arriving there on the twenty-fourth of November, 1774. I thank God for sparing my life and for granting me the favor of seeing the French again.

When I reached Natchitoches I did my duty of reporting my mission to Monsieur Demezier. I made him a general report of my expedition, but he paid no attention to it. I was very much hurt at this, but it did not surprise me, because he was angry that I should know that he had not harangued the nation as he made believe to the government.

A few days afterward I went to ask of Monsieur Demezier a passport to go to Opelous, whence I had set out to make this expedition, but he refused me, saying that I must wait for the Sieur Layssard to come to confirm what I had said. Three weeks later the Sieur Layssard came and confirmed all that I had reported. Monsieur Demezier became angry at him, saying that we would have it appear that he was a liar and that he had not arranged the treaty.

I brought written complaint against Sosier, which the Sieurs Layssard and Baudoin, who arrived some days later, confirmed. Then he repented for having permitted Sosier to return.

He has done everything possible for a year to make him succeed, which he finally did. With a brazen front he came back to Natchitoches with a sleeveless shirt and five thousand seven hundred pounds of merchandise[100] which he had carried off. This proved to Monsieur Demezier that what I had written to him was true.

After all Monsieur Demezier has said nothing to him, and has even left him free; he has paid no attention to the complaint which I brought against him; on the contrary, he has permitted him to go to Opelousas, where he has taken advantage of my absence to declaim against me from there to Pointe Coupée, where he lives at present, and where he has done the same as at Opelousas, of which I shall make a certificate to demand justice of your Lordship.

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[100] Presumably this was peltry.

As I am at present trading with the Chacto and Biloxy nations, it is necessary that I go to winter with them on the Ouatchita to collect the bills, and I have the honor of addressing the present to your Lordship, in order that you may have the time to read it between now and the month of March, when I come down to the capital, where I shall have the honor to answer any questions which your Lordship may wish to ask me.

After having sacrificed myself in the service of the king and having paid all the costs from my own purse, I put myself at the feet of your Lordship, with tears in my eyes, praying you to honor me by your protection and to aid me in securing some recompense for my past misfortune, for it will be glorious to serve under the orders of so worthy a governor. Therefore, I assure you, Sir, I shall always be zealous for the service of my king and ready to fulfill the orders of your Lordship whenever occasion arises.

I pray your Lordship to believe me to be one who has the honor to be with profound respect, your very humble and obedient servant, Monseigneur. J. GAIGNARD.
Village of the Chacto, November 10, 1777.

137. GAIGNARD TO BERNARDO DE GALVEZ
NOVEMBER 10, 1777[101]

MONSEIGNEUR: Having heard that your Lordship desired to win the hearts of the savage nations, both those depending on this province and those of the province of Taixe, and that for this reason you inquired about their life and manners, I should think myself failing in my duty to my king, God preserve him, if I did not report to your Lordship the knowledge which I have of the nations living in the west.

Monsieur de Villier, lieutenant-governor at Natchitoches in the year 1773, having heard that the Naytane were making continual incursions against the Spaniards, and wishing to stop it, resolved in the month of September to send a person capable of inspiring in them good sentiments, in order to turn them from this bad custom. Knowing my capacity among the nations, he did me the honor to propose this expedition to me, which I accepted, being zealous to serve my king.

Monsieur de Villier gave me written orders to keep an accurate journal of my route, the directions, the rivers, the location and the distances between the nations, their numbers and their habits. I therefore kept an accurate journal, which I have the honor to send to your Lordship, that you may have the goodness to read it and that you may see how important it is for the province of Taixe that your Lordship should prevent the hostilities which they are about to commit because of the breach of the promise given them, as your Lordship will see in my journal.

With most respectful sentiments I have the honor to be, with profound respect, the most faithful of your subjects.

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[101] Bancroft Coll., Louisiana.

Monseigneur, your very humble and obedient servant,
J. GAIGNARD [rubric].
Village of the Chacto, November 10, 1777.

138. UNZAGA Y AMEZAGA TO VILLIERS FEBRUARY 21, 1774[102]

Don Atanasio de Mezieres bears orders to do everything in his power to aid you, and not to hinder you in any way if, after you have delivered up the command, you are detained for a time in arranging for your journey or to close out your affairs, although he will aid the person or persons whom you may leave in charge of them, in order that you may experience no delay or loss.

God, etc. New Orleans, Feb. 21, 1774.
Señor Don Baltazar de Villiers.

139. UNZAGA Y AMEZAGA TO VILLIERS FEBRUARY 21, 1774[103]

The king has deigned, by his royal order of the eighth of last November, to confer upon Don Atanasio de Mezieres the rank of lieutenant-colonel of infantry, with the salary attached to that rank from the day that he resumes that command, which the king has likewise accorded him. In consequence, as soon as he presents himself with this communication, you will deliver the post to him, in order that he may again, as formerly, exercise in it the office of lieutenant-governor, in virtue of the royal commission which he has been granted. As soon as he shall have taken possession you will retire to Puen Cupé to fill the same office which you formerly held, of commander and judge of that district, where you will receive orders to the effect that the commander there shall do the same and retire to this capital.

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[102] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 189-1, no. 130.

[103] — *Ibid.*, no. 131; also leg. 566, no. 392.

God, etc. New Orleans, Feb. 21, 1774.

Señor Don Baltazar de Villiers.

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140. DE MEZIERES TO UNZAGA Y AMEZAGA MARCH 24, 1774[104]

SEÑOR GOVERNOR-GENERAL — MY DEAR SIR: I arrived at this post on the seventeenth of the present month, and took charge on the following day, as appears from the accompanying certificate of M. de Villiers, who to-day leaves for his former post.

The father curate, Fray Estanislao, has abandoned his parishioners, denying the petitions which they have made him to the effect that he might, perhaps, remain to hold services the coming Easter, as is charged by the precepts of the Church.

This entire district enjoys the most profound peace, and, as I am informed by public opinion and by letters from the Baron de Ripperda, up to the present there has been no trouble with the heathen nations, with the exception of the Comanches, who persevere in their rapine and incursions against these nations and the Osages. I shall try to find the necessary remedy, which your Lordship so greatly recommends, not neglecting the enterprise of cleaning up the Vachita River.

May God preserve the important life of your Lordship the many happy years for which I incessantly plead. Natchitoches, March 24, 1774.

Señor Governor-general, the hand of your Lordship is kissed by your most humble servant.

ATHANIO DE MEZIERES [rubric].

Señor Governor-general Don Luis de Unzaga y Amezaga.

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[104] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 188-3, no. 106.

[In the margin] The certificate of possession cited by this letter was sent to the Contaduría as security for the salary of lieutenant-colonel for Don Athanasio de Mezieres.

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141. ARRIAGA TO UNZAGA Y AMEZAGA

MAY 30, 1774[105]

[No. 159] In order to put a stop to the clandestine intercourse which on the eighteenth of last October your Lordship reported was being effected by the English traders by way of the wilds of the province with several savage nations, to remedy which your Lordship's efforts have not sufficed, the king has resolved that you shall entrust the ejection of them to Don Atanasio Mesieres, lieutenant-governor of Natchitoches, who shall take the measures dictated by his experience, his location, and his practical knowledge of the country.

May God preserve you many years. Aranjuez, May 30, 1774. DON JULº DE ARRIAGA [rubric].

Señor Don Luiz de Unzaga y Amezaga.

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142. DE MEZIERES TO UNZAGA Y AMEZAGA

JUNE 30, 1774[106]

SEÑOR GOVERNOR-GENERAL — MY DEAR SIR: In conformity with the verbal order which your Lordship gave me,[107] I sent by two militiamen to the person named Clermont, a resident of that city, an order to withdraw from El Orcoquisa, where he had introduced himself through the Plaquemine River, going there by sea with men and a launch, loaded, as I am told, in Manchac. He not only disobeyed the order, but also, arousing the heathen, would have put the said militiamen in peril of their lives if they had not prudently given up their enterprise. The said Clermont has already become known in the post of Los Arcansas for his irregular procedure against the commandant, Don Fernando de Leyva, as they have informed me; and now he has proved himself the boldest and most perverse of persons, slandering me before the Indians in terms which are put in evidence by the accompanying declaration of the witnesses who heard them, and who at the orders of my predecessor were residing in the said village of El Orcoquisa.

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[105] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 174, no. 0213. On March 9, 1773 De Mézières reported to the governor "that two Englishmen have come in to the said Uachita with goods and a plan to trade them in Cadodachos. If they reach there, no doubt, according to the order which I have issued, they will be arrested by craft and sent here with due promptness" [Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 2537, no. 206]. The governor replied March 31, 1773, [*ibid.*, 207].

[106] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 188-3, no. 108.

[107] Perhaps while he was in New Orleans, on his return from Europe.

Likewise I am informed by courier that the persons named Jeronimo Mataliche[108] and Juan Hamilton continue to make journeys to the mouth of the Trinity, buying horses and mules of the Indians who live there and who have been joined recently by thirty families of Coxos and Carancaoueys, apostates and fugitives from our missions, attracted by the opportunity to barter; and now they get a small amount of money, I do not know whether stolen or found in some shipwreck. These traders go in by land as far as the Bidais nation,[109] and try to arouse the interior tribes. From this a great unrest is resulting, both in the villages of the neighboring province of Los Texas, and in these of my jurisdiction; for these Coxos and Carancaoueys, being thoroughly conversant with the presidio of la Bahia del Espiritu Santo, where they were reared by the apostolic fathers, have just stolen from there a large number of horses and mules, which they undoubtedly expect to dispose of through these traders, as well as through the Indians of Atacapa and Opelousa, the latter of which the citizens of those territories make use of for such purchases. And thus there are to be guarded against on the coast these same rapines and disturbances which, with the labor known to your Lordship, we have stopped in the interior; and if I am not mistaken, the governor of Texas will not be tardy in complaining of them.

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[108] See the account of Cazorla's expedition to the Trinity in 1772, in *footnote* 9.

[109] The Bidai lived on both sides of the Trinity, some distance up from the coast. See "Introduction" and Map.

I am determined to take the severest measures against a certain Josef Antonio Butieres,[110] a deserter from Los Adaes and a resident of El Atacapas, where for many years he lived a scandalous life with a Negro slave of M. Masse,[111] afterward moving toward the cattle-ranch of M. Flamant.[112] He is an idle man whose sole occupation is to guide wanderers to the coast to carry on their illicit trade; and now he is interpreter for the said Clermont, being the one who did most to raise the disturbance. In this matter I ask the decision of your Lordship.

By letters of April 27, last, the Baron de Ripperda told me that he had experienced no disturbances from the former enemies, except from the Comanches. All of the chiefs, even the most remote, with the exception of the last, have come to visit me to welcome me on my return, and with the best assurances concerning their perseverance in peace and harmony with us.

The same chevalier governor adds that sometime last May, when he was to sell, he would send men to get the cannons, ammunition, carriages, and iron works which have remained and belong to the king.[113] In the transportation of them he will need fewer mules than he thinks, because, having left no one to care for these things, there was no lack of persons who trafficked in them on another account. He also reports to me his decision concerning the removal of some families which he left, till further orders, in the mission of Los Aiz.[114] In the future, therefore, we shall have a desert of two hundred seventy leagues between this post and the nearest one of New Spain, which is San Antonio de Bexar. But we shall have the convenience of the Indian couriers of whom we successfully make use for communication.

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[110] The form of this name given in *Document* 144 is Bontières.

[111] In 1765 a Mr. Massé was living among the Attacapa near the Texas border, perhaps near Attakapas. In the same year he applied for residence at the presidio of San Agustin de Ahumada, on the lower Trinity, his pretext being that he wished to free his slaves. He was evidently well acquainted with the Indians, for he offered to bring to friendship the Taovayas and other northern tribes. [Petition of Massé, in Arch. Gen., Mex., Cor. Vir. II, ser. i, fol. 264.]

[112] It is not clear whether Butieres or Flamant is meant here.

Don Remegio Poisot, lieutenant of militia of this company, because of his continual indisposition, weak eyesight, and old age, for he is nearly seventy, asks, in the accompanying memorial, for his discharge. In case your Lordship deigns to grant it, it is natural that sublieutenant Don Pedro Dupain should be promoted to his place, and Juan Baptista Trichel, first sergeant of said company, an honorable and intelligent person, to that of the latter.

May our Lord preserve the important life of your Lordship the many years which he can and I ask. Natchitoches, June 30, 1774.[115]

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[113] That is, after Los Adaes was abandoned.

[114] See Bolton, *The Abandonment and Reoccupation of East Texas*, 86-88.

[115] Concerning the English on the coast De Mézières wrote at length on August 8, to the commander at Attakapas. The substance of his letter was that he had heard that a man named Jacome Matalinche had gone to the mouth of the Neches, or Nieges, River with a boat manned by ten men; that there he was distributing liquor to the Indians, and maligning the governor; that he [De Mézières] had Clermont ordered to retire, but that Clermont laughed at the order and retired only after he got through trading; that immediately after Clermont retired, the Attacapas of Kascouikiou [Calcasieu] were sent by Boisdoré, of the latter place, to the Arkokisa to purchase horses, all of which were stolen by the coast Indians; and that there was danger that French trade would be ruined because the English goods were being sold so much cheaper

Señor Governor-general, the hand of your Lordship is kissed by your most humble and faithful servant,

ATHAN^IO^ DE MEZIERES [rubric].

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143. DE MEZIERES TO UNZAGA Y AMEZAGA
JULY 24, 1774[116]

SEÑOR GOVERNOR-GENERAL — MY DEAR SIR: I am despatching this messenger for the purpose of sending to your Lordship the copy and the translation of the proceedings against Don Marcos Vidal,[117] a citizen and a member of the commercial body of the villa of San Fernando de Bexar, who has come here without passport with eight servants, money, a drove of mules, baggage and equipment for the purpose of paying, as he declared, for various goods which in the month of last July he bought from three persons of this jurisdiction whom he accuses but who deny it. This Don Marcos Vidal and his servants I have imprisoned, and their property I have confiscated, listed, and sold at public auction, both on account of the difficulty of keeping them, in view of the short pasturage, and because of the great expense which would be entailed in caring for them. I beg that your Lordship will approve my action, with respect to the expenses occasioned by the arrest and capture of these men, whose boldness, due no doubt to the demolition of the presidio of Los Adaes, it was important that I should repress, as a warning to others who might plan similar enterprises.

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than those of the French. [De Mézières to the commander at Attakapas, Aug. 8, 1774, in Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 189, no. 132.]

[116] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 188-3, no. 110.

[117] See *Documents* 145 and 147. On July 24, Vidal wrote a petition to the governor explaining his case. [Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 188-3, no. 111; other documents in the same collection relative to the matter are those numbered 38, 112, and 115.] From *footnote* 124 it will be seen that goods were confiscated from Vidal on his return from Natchitoches.

May our Lord preserve you the many happy years which he can and which I desire. Natchitoches, July 24, 1774.

The hand of your Lordship is kissed by your faithful and humble servant. ATHANIO DE MEZIERES [rubric]. Señor Governor-general.

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144. UNZAGA Y AMEZAGA TO DE MEZIERES AUGUST 8, 1774[118]

With respect to what you report to me in your letter of June 30 last, let me say that as soon as you can arrest the persons of Clermont, Geronimo Mataliche, and Juan Hamilton, you will send them to this capital.

I have given like orders, entrusted to Alexandro Declue, commander of Opelousas, regarding the previously mentioned [illegible] Josef Anto Bontieres.

The retirement of Don Remegio Poisot has been conceded, and provision made for appointing the persons whom you suggested.

God preserve you many years. New Orleans, August 8, 1774.

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145. DE MEZIERES TO UNZAGA Y AMEZAGA SEPTEMBER 4, 1774[119]

SEÑOR GOVERNOR-GENERAL — MY DEAR SIR: In virtue of your Lordship's order, Don Marcos Vidal is going down to that capital, together with Messrs. Ste. Anne, Marmillion, and Bertran Auret, whose goods are confiscated and sequestrated.

I inclose with this the papers which I found in the possession of the above-named Marcos Vidal.

At the first opportunity the report of the negroes and mulattoes living in this district, of all ages and both sexes, will be sent, as well as of the product of the tax, for each one of the heads concerning which I have received orders.

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[118] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 188-3, no. 109.

[119] — *Ibid.*, no. 114.

I had Don Pedro Dupain and Don Juan Baptista Trichel respectively informed of their appointments, and have delivered to them the corresponding commissions.

I again send a nomination of a sergeant, in which there was a defect, and another in favor of the corporal who should replace Don Juan Baptista Trichel, he having been promoted to the sub-lieutenancy.

The servants and muleteers of Don Marcos Vidal have been set at liberty, and, with the exception of one who has taken sick, they set out at once for their districts.

All the nations of the interior continue to be very quiet, and with those of the coast, who were becoming rebellious, the same ought to be expected on account of the measures of your Lordship, and of the zeal and the vigilance of Don Alexandro De Clouet in fulfilling them.

The rumor is spreading among the Indians that the Osages have abandoned their ancient village in order to form another far distant from the first, and far up the Rio de los Arkansas.[120] From this enterprise it is to be presumed that, not having the opportunity to continue their accustomed insults, these truces will last only until they finish their new establishment. The truth is that for very nearly a year no trace of Osages has been seen, and that though expeditions have been made inland as far as their territories, they have not been encountered.

I have just learned through the Indians of Orcoquisa that from the Bahia del Espiritu Santo to the neighborhood of their pueblo, in which interval disembogue the large rivers of San Antonio, Guadalupe, Colorado, Brazos de Dios, and San Hacinto, there extends an island, with plentiful timber, pasturage, and conveniences, inhabited from time immemorial by the Carancagues nation, acquaintances of the Orcoquisa, a people numerous and ferocious, and although without other arms than their native ones, terrible to shipwrecked people, as was shown during the last war by the sad experience of the Chevalier Gremer, who, returning from Vera Cruz with supplies for Luisiana, grounded there, leaving about sixty companions, who died at the hands of these islanders, finding no other graves than the voracious stomachs of the above-mentioned Indians. They assure me that there is a large quantity of anchors, cannons, bells, pots, iron, and other utensils, which the inhabitants of the island despise as useless and leave scattered about; and finally that between the island and the mainland, by the upper entry, there is a channel, deep and spacious, which, if the report be true, forms one of the best and most sheltered ports to be found. If your Lordship should consider this report worthy of any attention, and should think it proper to investigate it, I think that this could be easily done, because there are plenty of persons in Opelousas capable of going in launches to Orcoquisa, where, joining the Indians of that place, that they might guide them forward, they could traverse in their company the said island and its surroundings, without the least risk from the natives who inhabit it.[121]

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[120] Shortly before this time the Little Osages split off from the main tribe and moved to the Missouri River, where they continued, with the Missouris, to give infinite trouble to the Spaniards at St. Louis [Mss. in the Bancroft Collection].

May God preserve and prosper the important life of your Lordship the many years which he is able and which I desire. Natchitoches, September 4, 1774.

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[121] This was the Culebra Island. De Mézières continued to be interested in the Karankawa to the time of his death. His suggestion was acted upon by Unzaga y Amezaga, as is shown by *Document* 147.

Señor Governor-general, the hand of your Lordship is kissed by your most faithful and humble servant,

ATHAN^{IO} DE MEZIERES [rubric].

146. DE MEZIERES TO UNZAGA Y AMEZAGA SEPTEMBER 12, 1774[122]

SEÑOR GOVERNOR-GENERAL — MY DEAR SIR: I have the honor to report to your Lordship that there has gone from Bexar to the Trinity River a captain of militia with lieutenant, sub-lieutenant, sergeants, corporal, and part of the old residents of Los Adaes, who are to form, at the order of the most Excellent Señor Viceroy, a company and a new pueblo named Nuestra Señora del Pilar de Bucareli.[123] The captain has written me, but he is not yet certain as to the place which he should select for his site.

Several persons have asked me for permits to go to Bexar to buy horses and mules, but I will not give them till I learn that your Lordship approves it.[124]

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[122] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 188-3, no. 116.

[123] For the history of this settlement see Bolton, *Spanish Abandonment and Reoccupation of East Texas*, 89-132.

[124] The communication referred to was dated Sept. 13, 1774. Unzaga y Amezaga claimed not to know whether the sale in Louisiana of Texas horses and mules was legal or not. In case it was legal, he suggested that a special brand be put on the animals legally sold, to distinguish them from those sold illegally. Ripperda replied that he could not grant the request on his own authority. In June, 1775, Ripperda sent the letter to the viceroy, stating that the colony was short of horses and mules at present, but that he thought it would be advantageous for the inhabitants to trade some product for them in Nuevo Santander, and to capture the plentiful mustangs in the vicinity. As Nuevo Santander lacked cattle, and Texas had plenty, he thought the inhabitants and missions might make a profit by trading them in Nuevo Santander.

Unzaga's letter was apparently sent with Agustin Grevembert, Captain at Attakapas, who brought a considerable stock of goods to exchange for the desired horses and mules. He was arrested at Bucareli by Gil y Barbo and his goods confiscated "with the contraband of Don Marcos Vidal." The viceroy replied that all dealings with Louisiana were interdicted, ordered the goods re-

May our Lord preserve and prosper the important life of your Lordship as many years as he can and as I desire. Natchitoches, Sept. 12, 1774.

Señor Governor-general, the hand of your Lordship is kissed by your most humble servant.

ATHANIO DE MEZIERES [rubric].

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147. UNZAGA Y AMEZAGA TO DE MEZIERES
OCTOBER 22, 1774 [125]

With your letter of September 4th, last, have arrived the prisoners in the case of Bidal and the papers relative to it.

The proper orders have been given to Don Alexandro Decluet for keeping order in those places and for causing those who might disturb it to retire.

The same individual is being written to at this time and requested to select persons capable of examining the island near La Bahia del Espiritu Santo. I shall be glad if the enterprise succeeds, and especially so if a detailed report should be the outcome, but if this does not result the first time, it will be repeated, as there is no danger to persons who know the geography.

I am sending the nominations of the second and the third sergeant of that militia company, with the necessary approval.

October 22, 1774.

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148. UNZAGA Y AMEZAGA TO DE MEZIERES
OCTOBER 22, 1774 [126]

I am informed of the establishment which you tell me is being made in the jurisdiction of San Antonio.[127]

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turned to Grevembert, and that he take them back to Louisiana. [Mss. in the Arch. Gen. Mex.]

[125] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 188-3, no. 115.

[126] — *Ibid.*, no. 117.

[127] Pilar de Bucareli.

I have written to the governor of that jurisdiction regarding the sale of mules and horses from that province here, and unless it is contrary to his instructions and orders I have no doubt the request will be granted. When he replies I will report the result to you. God, etc. New Orleans, October 22, 1774.

149. DE MEZIERES TO UNZAGA Y AMEZAGA DECEMBER 16, 1774[128]

SEÑOR GOVERNOR-GENERAL — MY DEAR SIR: Your Lordship having ordered me on my departure from that city to try to clear the Ouachita River of the vagabonds who were living on it, I have effected this removal through the Cadodachos Indians, and have arrested the persons named Andres Olivan, his wife and daughter, Antonio la Montagne, Francisco Postillon, Pedro Champignole, and Andres le Coureur, who at once obeyed your Lordship's order, and are waiting till spring, hunting in this vicinity. Likewise, the person named Galier has left in a cart for Punte Cupé, to take many things which he owes there, whose transportation was impossible by land. With respect to the persons named Joseph Etier, Baudry, and Jacinto Le Boeuf, with his wife and family, I have to report that they have fled, with the intention, it is said, of going to the English shore.

May our Lord preserve the important life of your Lordship the many years which he can and I desire. Natchitoches, Dec. 16, 1774.

The hand of your Lordship is kissed by your most humble servant, ATHAN^{IO} DE MEZIERES [rubric].

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[128] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 189-1, no. 139.

150. DE MEZIERES TO UNZAGA Y AMEZAGA
DECEMBER 16, 1774[129]

SEÑOR GOVERNOR-GENERAL — MY DEAR SIR: On the occasion of the visit made on my return by the captains of the nations of this district, I incited them, pursuant to the repeated requests of the Baron de Ripperda, to coöperate in avenging the incessant robberies and hostilities perpetrated by the Comanches at Bahia del Espiritu Santo, the Presidio of San Antonio, and neighboring places. All unanimously promised to interest themselves in the matter, and, in fact, the Tuacanas, having met in the month of October last a band of twelve men and two women of the said Comanchez, who were coming from Bexar with a scalp, killed them all, those pueblos having prepared themselves at once to go to war, and to treat as their enemies those who are ours. Of this I immediately reported to that chevalier governor, and I know that he will be delighted by this news.

May God guard the important life of your Lordship the many years which he can and I desire. Natchitoches, Dec. 16, 1774.

The hand of your Lordship is kissed by your most humble servant. ATHAN^IO DE MEZIERES [rubric].

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151. DE MEZIERES TO UNZAGA Y AMEZAGA
DECEMBER 26, 1774[130]

SEÑOR GOVERNOR-GENERAL — MY DEAR SIR: It becomes my duty to report to your Lordship how grieved the inhabitants of this place are at having been deprived of spiritual comforts since it has been without a minister.[131] During this time five adults and numerous infants have died without the consolation desired by Christians. This lamentable misfortune causes the compassion of their fellow-citizens, each one of whom fears a like misfortune, which I hope they will be spared through your Lordship's great zeal and notorious care.

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[129] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 189-1, no. 140.

[130] — *Ibid.*, no. 141.

[131] See *Document* 140 for the retirement of Father Stanislaus.

May God spare and prosper the important life of your Lordship as long as possible is my desire. Natchitoches, December 26, 1774.

The hand of your Lordship is kissed by your most humble servant, ATHAN^IO^ DE MEZIERES [rubric].

152. DE MEZIERES TO UNZAGA Y AMEZAGA
DECEMBER 26, 1774[132]

SEÑOR GOVERNOR-GENERAL — MY DEAR SIR: On account of the evacuation of Los Adaes last year, many persons went to their new destination debtors to the citizens of this post; and although the Baron de Ripperda interested himself in the payment, withholding for this purpose a part of what was due the said presidials, which is even now in his hands, the ill will of the presidials has caused them to oppose its delivery, and to make a petition to the most excellent Señor viceroy to frustrate the creditors. Therefore I appeal to your Lordship's highness, having the honor to send you the accompanying memorial, and entreating you to be favorable to your subjects, to whom your protection can never be wanting in matters that merit it.[133]

May God preserve and prosper the important life of your Lordship as many years as he can is my desire. Natchitoches, Dec. 26, 1774.

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[132] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 189-1, no. 142.

[133] On December 20 Antonio Charbonet, Estéban Pavie, Juan Piseros, and Pablo Marcollay, citizens of Natchitoches, wrote a memorial in behalf of themselves and other creditors, complaining that they had referred the matter of the debts of the Adaes settlers to Governor Ripperda, but that they had not heard from him. [Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 189-1, no. 143.]

The hand of your Lordship is kissed by your most humble servant. ATHAN^{IO} DE MEZIERES [rubric].

153. INVESTIGATION OF THE MURDER OF TWO TUACANA INDIANS, AUGUST, 1775[134]

In the post of San Juan Bautista de los Natchitoches, on the second day of the month of August of the year 1775, I, Don Atanacio de Meziérès, lieutenant-governor of said post, [declare that] whereas there have arrived in my presence two messengers despatched from the savage nations of this district, one named Brazo Quebrado [Broken Arm], magnate of the Quitseys, the other named Juan Baptista Layssard, a merchant among those nations, who have delivered to me a letter from Don Luis de Quindse, charged by me with the commerce, policy, and inspection of the Tuacanas, I have copied the said letter in order to place it at the head of the remedial proceedings. Translated literally from the French language into Castilian it is as follows:

> MY DEAR SIR: I have decided to send Señor Layssard to you to inform you that the day after my arrival at this pueblo of the Quitseys I learned that the person named Nicolás Chef had killed a Tuacana woman and a small child, whom he encountered on the road from the Tuacanes to the Quitseyes. The Indians say that he having tried to take by force the woman mentioned, she defended herself and was thus killed. The evidence on which they rely consists of a bay horse with Spanish brand and a bridle, which are in the possession of the said Nicolas, he having taken them away from the Indian woman after her death. Her husband has attempted to avenge her death, charging it to the French who are in their pueblo, but the chief prevented it, saying that first it was necessary to report it to you, and in this way find out what it would be best to do. In fact,

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[134] This document is from a copy in the Bancroft Collection, made from the original in Pap. Proc. de Cuba, before those papers had been sent to Spain. The copy does not include the whole document, some parts of it being summarized only.

> serious consequences may result, in view of the atrocity of the deed and of the disturbance which the savages have raised. The person named Brazo Quebrado, although of a different nation, goes expressly to ascertain what you will decide with respect to the said Nicolas, being charged at the same time to bring the horse and bridle which the latter took from the Indian woman. In order to be safer I will remain in this village of the Quitseys until I receive your orders, watching from here the movements of the Tuacanas, to whose chief I make known the report which I am sending you. I have the honor to remain, with respect for your Grace, etc. De Quindse.[185]

[Brazo Quebrado being asked what reason Nicolás Chef might have for committing so outrageous a deed, which appeared to be the work of the Osages or the Apaches] replies that the Osages and Apaches invariably take the scalps of those whom they kill; that not only were the scalps left on the woman and the child, but it was ascertained also that both had been killed by beating, which is never practiced by the enemies, who use only the flint and fusil; that having overtaken a party of Xaranames, who were going to hunt, a short time after the assassination and in the very place where the corpses lay, he took the greatest pains to ascertain the assassins by the tracks and signs, etc.

[Juan Baptista Layssard, being interrogated, replies that he is twenty-seven years old, a native of Rapide, and is engaged in trade with the Tuacanas]; that he knows nothing except what Brazo Quebrado, magnate of the Quitseys, has related; that the latter came with him; and that this assassination was the cause of great commotion among the savages, as it was believed to be the truth; that in view of this the person named Marafret and Señor de Quindse had been advised by the Quitseys not to leave their village, where their persons and their goods would be safe until the husband should be brought; that the Tuacanas demanded the head of the assassin; that in the first fury of their wrath they were on the point of killing Juan Bosquet and Miguel Pichet, servants of Messrs. Maraffret and de Quindse, resident in their village; that these servants were detained there until the measures taken in Natchitoches should be known; that the medal chief of the Tuacanas named Cyxynion had quieted the first fury of the nation, which, however, was still in a great uproar.

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[185] In a communication dated March 9, 1773, De Mézières reported to the governor a rumor that a trader named De Quindse and four other traders had been killed on the Washita River by the Osages. Whether or not he was identical with the De Quindse named here does not appear [Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 2537, no. 206]. If so, the rumor was of course untrue.

[Guillermo Leitage, corporal of militia, was sent from Natchitoches to capture Nicolás Chef. He set out for the Quitseys village accompanied by Morvant, Chef's employer, who wished to recover the goods he had entrusted to Chef. Going by way of the Nadacogs they learned that Chef had passed that way; continuing to the Assinays they learned that Chef had been killed near that place.]

To-day, August 18, 1775, I, lieutenant-governor of the post of Natchitoches, have ordered the person named Marti, a blacksmith resident in this place, to make a lance on which to expose in a high place the head of Nicolás Chef in the presence of Brazo Quebrado, magnate of the Quitseys, in conformity with what has been practiced in this post by the Señores de San Denys and Le Verrier, commandants for his most Christian Majesty, and to prove to the Indians, who had gathered here, our zeal, impartiality, and promptitude in giving them justice. Of this I make judicial record.

DE MEZIERES.

154 DE MEZIERES TO UNZAGA Y AMEZAGA
FEBRUARY 16, 1776[186]

SEÑOR GOVERNOR-GENERAL — MY DEAR SIR: According to the census which was taken at the beginning of this year, this jurisdiction consists of one hundred thirteen homes, in which live one hundred five heads of families, with eighty-six women, seventy-seven youths capable of bearing arms, one hundred six infants and children, thirty-four unmarried young women, one hundred young girls, and eighty-four bachelors and nonresidents dispersed in hunting and trade with the villages, or in the pay of the citizens.

There follow two male and two female free negroes, and two male and one female free mulattoes.

Item, one hundred thirty-four negro slaves, one hundred five working negro women, fifty-one negro boys, thirty-nine negro girls, twenty-six male mulattoes, twenty-three female mulattoes, sixteen male and twenty-eight female Indian slaves.

There are two hundred seventy-seven pieces of firearms, and thirty-one targets [*blancas*].

There is stock to the number of one thousand two hundred fifty-eight head of horses, one thousand eight hundred forty-two cattle, over three hundred sheep and goats and seven hundred eighty-two hogs.

Since last March there have been exported, according to the passports which I have issued for the city, Opelusa, and Punta Cortada, more than one thousand horses, about one hundred mules, nine quintals of indigo, fifteen *fanegas* of indigo seed, thirty thousand packages of tobacco, one hundred twenty dressed buffalo skins, thirty-six thousand deer-skins, five thousand *azumbres* of bear oil, the same number of pounds of tallow, some bacon, and other meats salted or dried.

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[186] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 112, no. 402. On January 10, 1776 De Mézières reported to the governor the death of Alexo. Grappé; recommended that presents no longer be given to the Natchitoches and Yatasí tribes, since they had disbanded and scattered among the Indians of Rapide and other bands; and stated that he had again repaired the fort and government buildings [*ibid.* no. 399]. On February 15 he wrote of the death of Juan Baptista Roujot [*ibid.*, 401]. On March 10 he requested permission to go to New Orleans [*ibid.*, 404]. On March 24 he reported that lead had been discovered on the premises of Luis de St. Denis [*ibid.*, 405].

The revenue of this post amounts to four hundred pounds contributed annually by the brandy-sellers to secure the closing of the wineshops which have been attempted; an equal sum which likewise is collected from the game of trucks, half of the last being assigned for the salary of the drummer of the militia company.

The company remains on the same footing as it was when established, being formed of eighty youths, most of them Creoles of the place.

The fort, whose houses I have rebuilt, is good and decent.

The parochial church is splendid, with many silver jewels and ornaments. It receives four hundred pesos, which, for their greater glory, the merchants of the villages have given in the form of alms, and it appears that this fund will be increased.

Finally, all the nations are dedicated to peace and trade.

May God guard and prosper the important life of your Lordship the many years which he is able and which I desire. Natchitoches, February 16, 1776.

Señor Governor-general, your Lordship's hand is kissed by your most faithful and humble servant

ATANASIO DE MEZIERES [rubric].

155. BERNARDO DE GALVEZ TO DE MEZIERES
APRIL 4, 1777[137]

[No. 6] By your letter of March 4, last, I am informed of the quiet which continues in that post and in the neighboring nations, and of the fact that the Panismahas have attached themselves to these latter, abandoning their former establishment or village which they had on the Misury, for the purpose of taking advantage of our trade and to make front against the Osages, who continue their hostilities and rapine.

The Osages have sued for peace with the Arkansas, as I am informed by the commander of that post, and with them ought to be mentioned those of that jurisdiction. We shall see whether they remain firm in it, which I doubt, on account of the bad faith which they have shown hitherto. I give you this information for your intelligence.

You may come to this capital as you request of me, leaving that post in charge of the proper militia officer.

God preserve you many years. New Orleans, April 4, 1777. BERNARDO DE GALVEZ.

Señor Don Atanº de Mezieres.

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156. THE BARON DE RIPPERDA TO CROIX
APRIL 27, 1777[138]

MY DEAR SIR: Considering it my duty to give your Lordship an idea of this province in my charge, I wish to inform you that it consists at present of this presidio and villa, which is its capital and comprises more than a thousand souls;[139] the presidio of La Bahia del Espiritu Santo, distant more than forty leagues toward the east-southeast (beyond it twenty leagues in the same direction one comes to the coast of the Gulf of Mexico), and containing about three hundred; the pueblo of Santa Cruz del Cívolo, about half way between that presidio and this, and off the road about a league toward the north, as I established it in the year 1771, though even yet it has not been built of stone, the site not having been determined; and the new pueblo named Nuestra Señora del Pilar de Bucarely, established in August, 1774, the most Excellent Señor viceroy having in mind the infelicity of the people formerly inhabitants of Los Adaes. It is distant more than one hundred thirty leagues from this pueblo, to the east-northeast, on the hither bank of the Trinity River, and has more than three hundred inhabitants, some having been prevented by their poverty from going there. It is two leagues – I mean two long days' – journey from the Gulf of Mexico and from the site of the extinguished presidio of Orcoquiza, at the mouth of that river; four from the mouth of the Colorado, going south-southwest;[140] three from that of the Brazos de Dios in the same direction; and three from the Nechas, which in that region separates this province from La Luisiana.[141]

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[137] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 1232, no. 14313; also *ibid.*, leg. 112, no. 410. In March, 1777, De Mézières reported to the governor that the Panis-mahas, divided into three bands, comprised eight hundred warriors; that they had left the Missouri and come south and selected a site between the Taovayas and the Cadodachos, one hundred eighty leagues from Natchitoches, attracted by trade with Louisiana and the desire to join the Nations of the North against the Osages; and that since the Osages were becoming worse all the time, this was a welcome move [Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 112, no. 409].

[138] Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(2), ff. 23-29.

This settlement is of the greatest importance as a means of acquiring reports of a coast as extensive as it is uninhabited, which I have ordered done and which has been done up to the present, especially through the Orcoquizá tribes, who live at the site of the presidio bearing their name; through the Vidaes, who go and come, but have their principal establishment about two leagues from the said pueblo; and through the traders[142] who from the post of Natchitoches frequent these nations just as they do the northern Indians on our frontier. Thus has been prevented the entry of the English, who were already beginning to introduce themselves among these nations by way of that coast, giving presents to the chiefs, and selling to the rest arms, ammunition, and other objects of Indian trade so reasonably that they already show preference for them over the traders of Natchitoches. At the time of the establishment of the settlement I caused forty-odd Vidais to come for the appointment of chiefs of their nation, on account of the death of others, and, giving them a good present, I admonished them not to permit the English to enter, or, if they should land on the coast, to report it promptly to the captain of Bucareli, Don Antonio Gil y Barvo.[143] I regarded the appointment of this man as the most suitable, since of all the inhabitants of Los Adaes he had the most farm property, possessing a ranch like a pueblo, the best personal qualities, and the greatest following among the inhabitants. For this reason they chose him to go, accompanied by another person,[144] to request of the viceroy that they be established even nearer the frontier. And in order that this should be done methodically and be given encouragement, as well as in order that they might have some means of defense, preserving local order, and administering justice, as they were far distant from all aid, I found it necessary that there should be a company of militiamen, with a captain, lieutenant, alférez, and sergeant, who at the same time should administer justice, as well as convenient that the said Gil y Barbo should be chosen captain of the militia and *justicia mayor*. He has fulfilled these offices up to the present, showing more ability than I expected, in view of his having been reared in Los Adaes, in all matters concerning the service of God, the king, and the prosperity of his settlers, whose indigence has had no other relief than what has been afforded them by the said *justicia mayor* with his oxen, cows, tools, and even his personal labor in the building of their houses, which are of wood such as the country supplies, as well as of the church. He requested, for their spiritual ministration, that his Majesty should provide them a parish priest at his expense for at least ten years. Consequently the most excellent Señor Viceroy ordered me to send in his name an official communication *de ruego y encargo*[144a] to the reverend father president of these missions requesting him to send the poor inhabitants of that settlement a father minister to provide them spiritual consolation until some other arrangement should be made, which was done at once. And besides guarding against the introduction of contraband, this same Gil y Barbo has the intelligence and skill requisite for dealing with the Indians, whose visits have caused him heavy expenses, and for making himself respected by them. That establishment, therefore, contributes not a little to the tranquillity of the tribes which surround it at short distances, such as the Tancaoues, a wandering tribe of evil inclinations, the Quitseings, the Texas, Vidais, and Orcoquizas. The Carancahuaces, a somewhat numerous tribe, supplied with arms, live for the most part on an island called La Culebra, which begins near the mouth of the Guadalupe River, not far from the presidio of

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[139] De Mézières in 1772 gave the population at more than 800. In the meantime it had been increased by part of the settlers driven from eastern Texas.

[140] The *Memorias* copy reads *surhuest* [f. 124].

[141] The *Memorias* copy interchanges the rivers, and makes it appear that the Brazos was the boundary between Texas and Louisiana [f. 124].

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[142] The *Memorias* copy reads: *restantes* in place of *tratantes*, which makes the sense altogether different [f. 124].

[143] For a statement of Ybarbo's work on the coast, see Bolton, *op cit.*, 119-123.

[144] The other person was Gil Flores [*ibid.*, 93].

[144a] By command and entreaty.

La Bahia, and continues in sight of the coast to that of La Luisiana.[145] They seldom disembark on the mainland, except a small branch of them which, having separated, lives with another small tribe called Quxanes between the mouth of the Guadalupe and that of the Colorado. But I have especially charged the *justicia mayor* of Bucarely to attempt by means of the Orcoquizas and their traders to communicate with this Carancahuaz tribe, for we do not know whether the English go among them, which would be natural. It is patent that the sailors who frequently strike their coast die at their hands, as happens to those who fall into the hands of some small tribes who inhabit other islands extending as far as to the mouth of the Rio Grande del Norte, in the colony of Nuevo Santander. Although base, these latter do no other damage, but, like many others of the same colony, they live as heathen. Although they are without means for missions in their country, they resist being brought out to these five near here, each of which is capable of maintaining even a thousand persons, without causing the Real Hacienda the least expense. However, when a bilander from La Luisiana a short time ago fell into the hands of this ranchería of Carancahuaces who live with the Cuxanes between the Guadalupe and the Colorado, they at once notified the captain of La Bahia del Espiritu Santo, as he had given them presents, and he went to seek them; but later, it is said, three other sailors died at their hands.

This province at present recognizes no other enemies[146] than the numerous and warlike Comanche nation, which embraces five nations, each with it individual name. They live toward the north, inclining a little to the northwest, but rove from the upper part of New Mexico and some of them from even farther, to within a hundred odd leagues from here. These bands are seldom wanting in this neighborhood, being favored by the nearby range of hills[147] in the same direction, and by the dense forests which on all sides surround this presidio. It is true, however, that the Apaches called Lipanes hypocritically cause much damage, especially in the stock, and, as they live near to the presidios of the line, extract numerous rebranded horses which they steal; and although they always profess friendship, they come in ever increasing numbers, and, according to observation, mixed with those who openly molest the said line every day more insolently. This I attribute to the fact that now the northern nations, our friends and their enemies, do not come as frequently as they did up to a little more than a year ago, after the treaty which they made; for although they are heathen the latter have shown that it is not their custom to visit those who do not visit them, and have made manifest how grateful they would be if Spaniards would go to their rancherías. This is proved by the good treatment they gave the inhabitants of this place whom I several times sent to them, until it was misconstrued by several inhabitants of this place, just as was the coming of some Frenchmen from La Luisiana, traders of those nations, who were brought as interpreters. This caused me very serious calumnies, as well as the entire curtailment of my communication with the inhabitants of that province and of their coming to this. Consequently there is now a lack of communication with those nations, which, even among the most civilized, cools friendship;[148] yet that which I effected with five of these nations is very desirable, as is plain to all who consider without prejudice the advantages accruing to this province. For these nations observe the peace even to the present, just as they promised, although they have always shown their displeasure at our treaty with the Lipanes and at the asylum which the latter find near the presidios. They do not make as numerous expeditions against them as formerly, being fearful that in said presidios they may be taken for Comanches; for in fact they make little distinction between these and the other northern nations, whom they commonly call in general interior nations, a mistake that might cause serious consequences. These nations being well informed that after the treaties with them (which I attained through the aid of Don Atanasio de Demesieres, commandant of Natchitoches, and by means of some thousands of pesos which their presents cost me) I succeeded in breaking the close alliance which the Apaches had with the Vidais and even with the Texas, the latter furnishing them especially a large quantity of fusils and ammunition, they are persuaded that, since it is nearly five years that they have lacked a supply of these same articles, they can secure those which they now enjoy only through the Spaniards; and there being no compulsion, they have been little convinced by the subterfuges by which I have tried to put them off. It is undeniable that the lamentable war which the old presidio of San Sabas as well as this province suffered, and even that with the Comanches which continues, reaching to the borders of the colony of Nuevo Santander,[140] had its origin in the fact that those nations saw that the Apaches, united with our troops, made war on them and molested them continually and found these Apaches in possession of prisoners taken from them by the latter, always under protection of the presidio of San Sabas. I have thought it very important to report this correct view of the matter to your Lordship, as well as the other things which in outline I have made known to your proved zeal and impartial discernment.

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[145] The *Memorias* copy here states that La Culebra begins near the Guadalupe River and "continues in sight of the coast of La Luiciana" [f. 225].

[146] The *Memorias* copy reads: "declared enemies" [f. 226].

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[147] The Balcones Escarpment, running from San Antonio past Austin. See Simonds, *op. cit.*

[148] The *Memorias* copy reads *referia* in place of *resfria* [f. 227].

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[140] Now comprised in Tamaulipas and southern Texas.

Furthermore, I should inform your Lordship that this province contains five missions near this presidio, the farthest being three leagues away, and two near that of La Bahia; and that notwithstanding the fact that three of them have been reinforced in my time, they now have no place to get recruits except from the mentioned nations who live in the colony of Nuevo Santander. But this is prevented by the inhabitants there, who wish them left in heathendom, as the country lacks facilities for establishing missions on a solid basis, while these, although better founded than any others, will be annihilated, especially that of San Antonio, very close to this presidio, unless some supply be provided from those nations of the Colony; for the rest, who are very haughty, their reduction can not be expected for a long time. The two missions near the presidio of La Bahia are likewise very short of people, especially that of Rosario.

I pay your Lordship my respects with the blindest obedience, and beg our Lord to spare your life many years. San Antonio de Bexar, April 27, 1777.

The hand of your Lordship is kissed by your most respectful and affectionate servant.

El Baron de Ripperda.

Señor Cavallero de Croix.

157. DE MEZIERES TO UNZAGA Y AMEZAGA
MAY 2, 1777.[180]

SEÑOR GOVERNOR-GENERAL — MY DEAR SIR: I have the honor to send you with the census which by your letter of April 5 last you ordered me to take, four bundles of tobacco, which would seem to be sufficient to show how they cultivate it here. I having explained to the inhabitants assembled for the purpose the advantage which they are promised by the mercy of the king regarding its sale, as set forth in another letter of your Lordship, dated the seventh of the same month of April,[181] all were grateful and encouraged to raise as much as possible of this product, whose price before this province was attached to the fortunate dominions of his Majesty usually varied from ten to eight sueldos a pound, never falling below the latter. And in view of the new price which your Lordship plans to establish, they are unanimous in saying that, considering it not only as part of his great wisdom but also of his notorious love for his subjects, they will gladly conform to it, and with the other points, concerning its transportation, delivery, receipt, and payment, confidently and gladly leaving their interests to such honorable hands, whenever he may regard it proper to make known to them his final decision.

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[180] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 112, no. 413. On May 31 De Mézières reported that the Osages had stolen the horseherd of a resident of the district of Natchitoches who was on his way to trade with the friendly tribes; and that he deplored the treaty between the Osages and the Arkansas [*ibid.*, no. 415]. On June 27 he wrote that the Quitseys and Nadacog chiefs had reported that Francisco Beaudoüin, who had absconded from Natchitoches with property of others, was trading on the Arkansas with the Osages; that the chiefs had volunteered to go and plunder and arrest him; that he had accepted their offer; that a trader had brought a captive Spanish woman, secured from the Comanches by the Taovayas; and that it was rumored that the Panis-mahas were coming to make him their first visit [*ibid.*, no. 416].

[181] In the letter of April 7, referred to, Gálvez states that the king has decreed that tobacco can be imported into Mexico from Louisiana only, and that tobacco-raising has been prohibited in several of the Mexican provinces for the express purpose of promoting its culture in Louisiana [Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 1232, no. 4311]. On May 2, Gálvez wrote with reference to relations between Osages and Cadodachos [*ibid.*, leg. 1232, no. 4317].

The cacique of the Cadodachos, a people extremely loyal and faithful, has just visited me to inform me of the affray which has just occurred with the Osages, who killed five of his men and two of his women and stole a large number of his horses – a blow all the more sensible inasmuch as others like it are feared, and since its repetition unquestionably promises the total destruction of this commendable nation. These Osages do not stop their rapine, assassination, and outlandish barbarity even with us. Of this I will cite, for example, although I am fearful of offending your Lordship's sensibility, the tragic fate of a young Frenchman whom they put on a spit and roasted alive, having found him alone and helpless; another, whose father they beheaded, they caused to carry the head more than two hundred leagues, till they reached their pueblo, where, in the presence of the unfortunate boy they performed those abominable dances which always accompany such trophies. May God spare and prosper your Lordship's life the many years which he can and I desire. Natchitoches, May 2, 1777.

Señor Governor-general, your Lordship's hand is kissed by your most humble servant,

ATHANASIO DE MEZIERES [rubric].

158. THE BARON DE RIPPERDA TO BERNARDO DE GALVEZ, JUNE 8, 1777 [152]

MY DEAR SIR: Although the immediate dispatch of the accompanying package, which is sent me in haste [*en diligencia*] by the commandant inspector of the interior presidios of this kingdom, to overtake some men who left three days ago for the pueblo of Bucareli, in order that it may continue to your Lordship's hands, gives me but little time to take advantage of it, I am doing so in order to offer to serve you, and to congratulate you on your rank of colonel, as well as for the command which the king has deigned to give your Lordship of the province of Louisiana, with the general and merited approval of all its inhabitants, as I am informed. This gives me pleasure because of the merit which has made you worthy of this honor and because of other kinds of pleasure which I shall experience, especially if your Lordship shall make known your orders, both during the short time which I have to remain in this province, and in that of Camayagua, whither I was ordered some days ago, or anywhere the mercy of the king may send me.

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[152] Bancroft Coll., Louisiana.

I must at this time beg your Lordship to deign to recommend to the lieutenant-governor and commandant of the post of Natchitoches that he continue with his known zeal to watch that the heathen nations, who with his aid made peace with us, shall continue it with due exactitude, and that the nation of the Aguages, or Panis Mahas, who in great numbers are approaching us, shall likewise observe it; and that he watch over the conduct of the traders among these nations, taking care that for no cause shall they furnish the least thing to the Comanche nation, with whom, peace not having been secured, war continues. As to my part, this Don Atanacio Demezieres knows very well that I have spared no pains to secure the tranquillity of this province. Repeating that I am at your Lordship's orders, and hoping that you will command me, I beg our Lord to preserve your life many years. San Antonio de Bexar, June 7, 1777.

The hand of your Lordship is kissed by your most attentive and affectionate servant.

El Baron de Ripperda [rubric].

Señor Don Bernardo de Galvez.

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159. CROIX TO THE BARON DE RIPPERDA
JULY 9, 1777[153]

All the points touched upon by your Lordship in the report which under date of April 27 you make me of that province are worthy of the most careful attention; but although I know how urgent it is that measures be taken, I wish to take them in such a way as to assure their success and utility, which, perhaps, might be risked by haste or by an over-urgent desire to correct the ills.

The greatest ill suffered generally by the provinces in my charge consists in the constant ravages of the hostile Indians. According to what your Lordship tells me, the Comanche is a declared enemy of that jurisdiction, and likewise the Apache-Lipan, though under the pretext of their deceitful treaties, which the rest of the Indians of the North faithfully observe.

With respect to the Comanche, I have no doubt your Lordship will make use of all means possible to restrain them, as well as to avoid the damages caused by the Lipan, overlooking some of the excesses which for the present and until a better occasion arises are irremediable; but with respect to the friendly Indians of the North, I do not approve your Lordship's conduct, for, being responsible to the king for that province, you ought to proceed according to the dictates of your zeal, knowledge, and experience, without fear of slander, which easily vanishes when a chief strives with integrity, honesty, and disinterestedness.[154]

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[153] Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(a), f. 29.

[154] Ripperda is here criticised for not doing what O'Conor and others had so found fault with him for doing.

Under this assumption, as your Lordship knows that the way to preserve peace with those Indians of the North is to have the frequent friendly dealings which used to be afforded them, it appears to me well to continue them, and that in all matters your Lordship should proceed as one who has the facts before him; while I, as the principal responsible for the results, trust to your distinguished character, honor, and position.

May God preserve your Lordship many years. Mexico, July 9, 1777. EL CAVALLERO DE CROIX.
Señor Baron de Ripperda.

[Endorsement] I certify that these[154a] are copies from the originals. Mexico, July 26, 1777.
ANTONIO DE BONILLA[155] [rubric].

160. BERNARDO DE GALVEZ TO DE MEZIERES JULY 28, 1777[156]

[NO. 12] In view of the lack caused in that post by the absence of Father Fray Luis de Quintanilla,[157] there being no other there to administer spiritual aid to its inhabitants, he is now returning thither, in order that they may have this consolation, according to your request made in your letter of May 27, last. This father appears to me to be adorned with all the virtues suitable to his estate and the Holy Religion, and fitted to teach the faith in pueblos where it is being lost through lack of missionaries to teach it. I therefore recommend that you treat him well and protect him as far as you can in order that he may remain willingly in that district.

[154a] *Documents* 156 and 159.

[155] Copies of Ripperda's report and Croix's reply were transmitted by the latter to José de Gálvez on July 26, 1777, without comment [Croix to José de Gálvez, Arch. de Indies, Estados Unidos, leg. 3884].

[156] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 1232, no. 14319.

[157] Fray Luis Quintanilla was curate at Natchitoches between 1776 and 1783. The following is a list of curates there between 1736 and 1796, made up from the parish records at the curate's house in Natchitoches. The list is obviously incomplete. Pierre Vitry, Jesuit, 1737-1738; Fr. Jean François, 1738; there is a break in the records to 1741; Fr. Arcange, 1741-1744; Fr. Dagobert, Capuchin, 1743-1744; Fr. Barnabé, Capuchin, 1744-1745; Fr. Eustache, 1745-1750 (Fr. Amé was there in March, 1749); there is a gap in the records for ten years; Fr. Valentin, Capuchin, 1759-1762 (in this period Fr. Joseph Díaz Infante and Fr. Joseph Calahorra y Saenz, of Los Adaes, officiated several times, while one burial was made by a layman, Jean Luis Bormé, in default of a curate); Fr. Francisco Xavierus á Concepcione Boseta, Fr. Ygnacio Maria Laba, and Fray Calahorra y Saenz, missionaries of Los Adaes, officiated several times in 1763-1764, while once in 1764 Jacques Bunel, a layman, performed one burial; Fr. Stanislaus, Capuchin, 1764; there is a break in the records to 1776; Fr. Luis Quintanilla, 1776-1783; Fr. Francisco de Caldas, 1783-1785; Fr. Joseph de Arazena, 1786; Fr. Juan Delvaux, 1786-1795; Fr. Pavie, 1795-

May God preserve you many years. New Orleans, July 28, 1777. BERNDO DE GALVEZ.

Señor Don Atanazio de Mezieres.

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161. THE BARON DE RIPPERDA TO CROIX
OCTOBER 28, 1777 [158]

MY DEAR SIR: Regarding as one of the matters of greatest importance to this province the obedience and subordination which should be observed by all the traders among the friendly nations, reputed to belong to this province of Texas, since it has no limits to the north, and since the country where they live and which they frequent does not belong to Luisiana, I ought not to defer longer making it known to your Lordship. For, once these traders know that they need the permission of the governor of this province to exercise their trade, and that they must suspend it and retire from the nation where they happen to be whenever they are so ordered, and this being made known to the Indians, far from their causing any extortion or daring to protect the apostates from the missions, the Indians will restore

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1796. From 1776 to 1795 the records are mainly kept in Spanish, but under Fr. Pavie they are again in French. It would seem from the above list that the Louisiana cession in 1762 had the effect of disturbing the continuity of church policy at Natchitoches, for during several succeeding years there seems frequently to have been no regular curate there.

[158] Bancroft Coll., Louisiana.

them at the least suggestion or threat to deprive them of the trade, and will be grateful, knowing *that they enjoy* it through permission from this province, although the traders may come to them from the other.[189] With this idea I have ordered the captain of militia and *justicia mayor* of Bucareli that in my name he shall cause the traders to observe due obedience and subordination; and although in the cases which have arisen the proper thing has been done without opposition, all doubt which might arise should be prevented beforehand, especially with respect to the Taovayas, and to the Aovages, who live with the former, as I have reported to your Lordship, in view of their greater distance. The former live in their ancient fort at which Don Diego Hortiz Parrilla arrived, and the Aovages below that place on the river called Colorado, which, a long distance from there, passes through the Cadodacho nation and the post of Natchitoches. Any difficulty which might cause the heathen to note lack of harmony between us and the traders or the inhabitants of Natchitoches would be very prejudicial to them, for, they having become well informed that Luisiana was of a different nation from us, we have labored from the time of the treaty to disabuse them of this idea, and to make them see that we are now the same nation, ruled by the same king, or captain, the greatest on whom the sun shines; and although they cannot understand why, if this is the case, arms and ammunition which they obtain there are not given them here, some of them are beginning to understand that they would not enjoy this [trade] now without our permission. Therefore, it being so important that the same should be made known to all the friendly nations, and even if permissible to the Comanche nation outside, I make known to your Lordship all the foregoing in order that you may decide what you think best and make known to me your precepts so that I may give willing obedience.

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[189] For the bearing of this, see the "Introduction," p. 105.

I beg that our Lord may preserve your important life as many years as possible. San Antonio de Bexar, October 28, 1777.

The hand of your Lordship is kissed by your most respectful and loving servant. EL BARON DE RIPPERDA.
Señor Cavallero de Croix.

I certify that this is a copy from the original which is in the secretariat of the commandancy-general in my charge. Chihuagua, September 15, 1778.

ANTONIO BONILLA [rubric].

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162. CROIX TO BERNARDO DE GALVEZ
SEPTEMBER 11, 1778[160]

MY DEAR SIR: By the accompanying copy of the representation made by the governor of Texas your Lordship will be informed as to his reasons for thinking that the inhabitants of that province engaged in trade with the friendly Nations of the North should recognize the authority of his government, and that they should not be permitted to trade without his express license.

Although this petition appears to me just, I have made no other provision than to order that governor to treat those citizens as subjects of his Majesty, but to watch and be vigilant regarding their conduct, arresting and proceeding justly against those who commit punishable excesses or misdemeanors. I am reporting this to your Lordship in order that, you kindly giving your opinion, our measures may be harmonized, to avoid the evil which perhaps might result from the unrestrained trade of men who, distant from their chiefs, live all the time among the savages.

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[160] Bancroft Coll., Louisiana.

May God preserve your Lordship many years. Chihuahua, Sept. 11, 1778.

The hand of your Lordship is kissed by your most attentive and faithful servant,

El Cavallero de Croix [rubric].

Señor Don Bernardo de Galvez.

163. BERNARDO DE GALVEZ TO DE MEZIERES OCTOBER 28, 1777[161]

By your letter of the twenty-fifth of August I am informed of the death of the three caciques of the nations mentioned, and I approve your having ordered their pueblos to go to the Baron de Ripperda for the election of others, as they requested. I also approve the reply which you gave the Panis-mahas regarding the visit which they were planning to make you, and have taken note of all the rest concerning which you write.

By another letter, of the fourteenth of September, you report the death and maltreatment of many of our hunters on the Arkansas River at the hand of the Osage Indians, with whom Captain Baltazar de Viliers has just made a treaty, enclosing a paper in which you explain your opinion regarding an expedition against these Osages. This appears very good to me, and merits my approval, as it is dictated by your zeal for the royal service and the welfare of the vassals; but as you must at present undertake an expedition with the Chevalier de Croix, which will not admit of any delay, I shall await your return, and meanwhile I shall have time to study your plan.

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[161] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 1232, no. 14236.

I received the declaration made by the harvesters of the number of rolls of tobacco that might be gathered and delivered in the month of January, enclosed in another letter of the fourteenth of the same September, in which you inform me that because the instructions for the matter arrived late, it was not possible to take all the precautions which they provide.

The request for a schoolmaster which you make of me in the name of those inhabitants cannot be granted, since those living in this city ought not to leave it, according to the contract which they have made with his Majesty.

In the first bark which leaves for Havana I shall write to the viceroy of Mexico, that he may give orders to the commanders of presidios to arrest and send the Cimmaron Negroes of this province who may escape to them, because of the abuse and damage which otherwise would result to the owners, as you mention in your letter of the fourteenth of September.

May God preserve you many years. New Orleans, October 28, 1777. BERN^{DO} DE GALVEZ.

Señor Don Atanazio de Mesieres.

VII. PLAN FOR JOINT CAMPAIGNS AGAINST THE OSAGES AND APACHES BY THE NATIONS OF THE NORTH AND THE FORCES OF TEXAS AND LOUISIANA

1777-1778

164. DE MEZIERES TO BERNARDO DE GALVEZ SEPTEMBER 14, 1777[162]

MY DEAR SIR: On the 24th of last August Fin-hi-ouen, medal chief of the village of the Great Cadodachos, reported to me the following occurrence:

Going in the latter part of the preceding July to the banks of the Arkansas River, he met four hunters who gave signs of extreme melancholy. Upon asking them the cause, he learned that the Osages had just forcibly confiscated their ammunition, weapons, clothing, and personal belongings, leaving them exposed to the inclemency of the weather and in the direst need – a casualty almost equal to death. Infuriated by it, the said Fin-hi-ouen immediately followed the trail of the thieves, overtook them, killed five, recovered the spoils of our people, and returned to deliver them, reserving nothing but the glory attached to a deed so gallant and worthy of gratitude.

While there he learned that at the place called El Cadron, on the same Arkansas River, there is a band of Englishmen who have built a block house [*casa con troneras*] in which they keep a great quantity of merchandise destined for trade with the Indians of this district, with the intention of making known to them their establishment, plans, and the low price of their goods. In view of this he asks my permission to dislodge them, and I have given it, with the necessary instructions to prevent the possible mistake of taking as vagabond strangers persons who may be our fellow countrymen and subjects of the king; and, in case it should turn out they are such as they are believed to be, the best method of getting to them without risk, and for avoiding as far as possible the shedding of blood, contenting themselves with the capture of the persons for the purpose of bringing them before me, and reserving as a trophy of their expedition and a premium for their zeal everything which may be found in their possession.

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[162] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 2358, no. 261.

I had scarcely sent a messenger with this advice when another arrived from the fort of Los Arkansas with letters from Don Baltazar de Villiers, in which he reports the assassination of seven Frenchmen – the work of the Osages – and the suspicion that many others of those who are wandering about with passports, feeling secure in the shelter of the accursed treaty, have perished. The violators of the treaty, it is added, convinced that the blow related above, which the Cadodachos so justly as well as so fortuitously have given them, was premeditated and prearranged between these and the hunters, boast of having succeeded in making reprisal – reasoning worthy of the barbarous concept which produces it, and impossible of refutation.

I will finish this communication with the plans which I regard best suited for the chastisement of so ferocious and intractable a race. I submit it to the great intelligence of your Lordship, which will be able to distinguish its defects and errors; and I beg that you will not attribute my discourse, which I already think little worthy of your attention, to presumption, but to love for my nation and to zeal for the service of his Majesty.[168]

May God spare and prosper the important life of your Lordship the many years which he can and I desire. Natchitoches, September 14, 1777.

Señor Governor-general, the hand of your Lordship is kissed by your most faithful servant,

ATHANASIO DE MEZIERES [rubric].

[*Enclosure–Plan for a Campaign against the Osages*]

The necessary punishment of the Osages may be effected in two ways:

First, by depriving them of all supplies, for through the daily consumption of what they have left they naturally would soon experience the greatest need with respect to subsistence and defense. In consequence, their enemies, all the more ardent in proportion as they recognize that the desired hour of their vengeance has come, will take advantage of finding them exhausted and helpless to hasten their destruction.

This plan has been tried, but has failed, and it is feared that it will succeed no better in future.

First, because when the misery of those whose punishment is desired reaches a certain point, they will exert themselves to excite the pity of the commandant of Los Ilinoeses with humble messages, with pretended weeping, with presents, and even with offers of the heads of those whom they will claim to be the instigators of the last uprising. The dangerous conclusion that they have repented having resulted from this, they will be pardoned for their atrocities, or, to put it better, invited to perpetrate new ones.

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[168] Before leaving Mexico, Croix wrote to De Mézières (July 9, 1777) ordering him to repair to San Antonio, there to await further instructions. The order was reported to Gálvez on August 28. On September 16 Gálvez wrote to De Mézières granting permission [Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 112, no. 427; *ibid.*, leg. 1232, nos. 4323, 4324].

Second, because among the traders, men usually debased and of little honor, there will be no lack of persons who, overcome by greed, but protesting other reasons for the journeys which they plan, will carry them supplies, which will perpetuate their boldness, impunity, and injuries to our nation.

The second method of reducing so indomitable a people, at the same time employing the first, which may be regarded as the prelude to their ruin, is the following, it being noted that no nation equals this in cowardice, for in the face of any resistance, to say nothing of a vigorous assault, they so lose heart as to throw down their arms; they trust for their health only to the fleetness of their feet; and with disordered cries born of their terror and desperation, they prove their cowardice, not having spirit even to pretend the contrary.

The village of the Osages, which, according to men of experience, contains eight hundred men, is situated on an eminence in the midst of a large plain, in which they pasture their horses and raise their crops, so that the troops who may attempt to attack them at the most opportune time, which will always be late in August or early in September, upon their arrival will at once capture their horses, their grain, the wood which they are forced to go to seek at a long distance, and the water which, since the nearby arroyos dry up at this season, they are obliged to provide themselves with from springs at a long distance from their settlement.

Their houses being of straw, with a narrow street between them, they will easily burn, by making use of arrows, tinder, and the aid of wind. This will deliver to the knife those who attempt to flee from the flames.

The Indians of this district who may be desired and regarded as of service, will come and enlist at the slightest suggestion, without asking for a stipend, and solely to satisfy their hatred.

The place to which to cite the assembly with a view to the best success will be the pueblo of the Taouaiazes.

First, because it is the head and on the frontier, and exceeds all the others in population.

Second, because any of the neighboring tribes that may be cited, can go there quickly.

Third, because it is better supplied with pasturage, provisions, horses, mules, and trappings than any of the others.

Fourth, because the march against the enemy by way of the uninhabited district over which it must be made will be shorter, easier, better supplied with wild cattle, and more secret.

Fifth, because use will be made of two bronze portable cannon left by Col. Don Diego Parrilla.

The leader will be wise to limit the number of the persons volunteering, lest they should embarrass, and leave the villages vacant and exposed to any insult. This explanation will appease those who may not be selected. For example,

The Cadodachos will be able to furnish	50 men
Nadacogs and Nasones	25
Nabedakioux	30
Quitseys	25
Tancagues	60
Tuacanas	60
Anamas or Xaranames	20
Taouaizes	300
Panis-Mahas	300
Comanchez	400
	1,300 [1,270]

All these men will be mounted, most dextrous with bow and arrow, and equally so with the fusil and the lance, with which they are well supplied.

The project of enlisting the Comanches, so notorious for their hostilities and robberies, will cause surprise, unless it is remembered that by this means they will be influenced to better customs. For, as these nations, whenever they go to the aid of any warlike tribe are given the name *Techan*, similar in meaning to *comilito* of the Romans, and comrade in our language, and there results at once among those who use it a sort of kinship, a very firm union of interests, a complete sharing of common injuries, and a deep-seated opinion that the violator of so sacred a pact will receive the punishment which the supreme being has ready for liars. It should be added that the Comanche excel all the other nations in breeding, strength, valor, and gallantry.

To control this multitude, keep it properly disciplined, achieve the hoped-for end, and, in case of any misfortune, make an honorable retreat, it must be accompanied by the Frenchmen who reside in each village, since they know their idiom; and by a certain number of others, especially Creoles, who, from their experience in dealing with Indians, among whom they are reared, know how to gain their good will.

Also, it is important to make some presents to the chiefs, not forgetting munitions of war. These being exchanged for provisions, and for horses on which to carry the sick, wounded, and the heaviest munitions, they will always employ them, placed in the hands of our allies, for the principal object, which is the expedition treated of.

This may be begun by leaving Natchitoches in the spring, because the river, being swollen at that time, will serve to go in as far as Cadodachos in canoes, thereby saving the roughest and hardest part of the road. The rest of the way to the Taouaizes consists of the finest plains, where use can be made of the horses which these allies may bring in response to a notice given them beforehand.

165. COUNCILS OF WAR HELD AT MONCLOVA (DECEMBER 11, 1777) AND SAN ANTONIO (JANUARY 5, 1778) TO CONSIDER FRONTIER INDIAN MATTERS[164]

Don Teodoro de Croix, Knight of Croix, of the Teutonic Order, brigadier of the royal forces, governor and commandant-general of the Interior Provinces[165] of

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[164] Bancroft Coll., Louisiana. Also in Bexar Archives, *Prov. Int.*, vol. 64.

[165] "The term Provincias Internas [Interior Provinces] was at first used in New Spain in a general sense to designate the frontier provinces, but after 1776 the expression had a technical meaning. During his residence in America the *visitador*, José de Gálvez, prepared plans for the reorganization of the government of New Spain, including the separation of the northern provinces from the jurisdiction of the viceroy. The change was effected by royal order of August 22, 1776, which erected into a new government the provinces of Nueva Viscaya, Coahuila, Texas, New Mexico, Sinaloa, Sonora, and the Californias. These provinces were put under the military and political government of the commandant-general of the Interior Provinces [*Comandante General de las Provincias Internas*], directly responsible to the king, and practically independent of the viceroy, the Audiencia of Guadalajara retaining the judicial authority which it had hitherto exercised. Says Bancroft, 'Practically the change was the setting-off of a new viceroyalty.'

"The commandant-general was invested with authority over the political, judicial, and financial officials of the provinces, and enjoyed the royal patronage [*patronato real*] with respect to the appointment of curates. Nevertheless, his position was primarily a political one, and his chief duty was to organize and protect the difficult frontier, twice as long and little less difficult than the Rhine-Danube frontier of the Roman Empire. With him were associated an *auditor de guerra* and *asesor*, or military judge and attorney-general . . . the two offices being combined in one person.

"Chihuahua was selected as the seat of the new government. In 1780 Arispe was made the capital, but soon Chihuahua again became the official headquarters. The first commandant-general of the Interior Provinces was General Theodoro de Croix (better known as El Caballero de Croix), brother of the viceroy of the same name. Galindo Navarro came from Spain as the first *auditor de guerra* and *asesor*" [Bolton, *Guide to the Archives of Mexico*, 75]. For subsequent changes in the system, see *ibid.*

New Spain, superintendent-general of the Royal Hacienda, etc.

Desiring to merit the honor conferred upon me by the sovereign mercy of the king when he entrusted to me the command of these vast provinces, and believing that their happiness depends upon putting an end to the incessant hostilities which they suffer, it has seemed to me proper to hear, discuss, and confer upon in the council of war called for this day the opinions of the officers of highest rank, longest experience, and greatest knowledge now in this province; and these being Colonel Don Jacobo Ugarte y Loyola, who has just ceased to be its governor, and the present governor, Colonel Don Juan de Ugalde, both of whom are present; the retired Lieutenant-colonel Don Vicente Rodriguez, Adjutant-inspector Don Antonio Bonilla, the Presidial Captains Don Rafael Martinez Pacheco, Don Francisco Martinez, Don Juan Antonio Serrano, Don Manuel de Cerezedo, Don Diego de Borica,[166] and Don Domingo Diaz, captain of the first flying company of the expedition, I command that, seated in the above order, according to their rank, positions and tenure, each one, beginning with the most recently appointed, shall set forth his opinion upon each of the points which shall be set forth after this decree, keeping in mind, for the disinterestedness and truth of their reports, the proper viewpoint of the best service of God and the king, the welfare of these precious dominions, and the responsibilities imposed upon honorable officers like these gathered in this council. And since the Adjutant-inspector Don Antonio Bonilla, secretary of the commandancy-general, is present in the council as a voting member, I have decided that Alférez Don Manuel Merino[107] shall act as secretary; and since the subjects to be treated of and conferred upon are of the greatest gravity, and since it is very important that they be scrupulously kept secret in order not to endanger the success of the plans decided upon, exercising the superior authority which his Majesty has deigned to grant me, I condemn and subject to public degradation from office any one of the officers who may reveal or discuss outside of the council anything which shall be conferred upon or decided in it, since I am required to direct as reserved the orders which in consequence have to be issued, and to lock and seal with three seals in the secret archives of the commandancy-general all that may result, opening it only in case the councils have to be repeated, whenever this may be necessary, or to issue the necessary orders. Under these conditions, and with the further one that if any of the voters may have cause to express his opinion in writing for the purpose of amplifying and clarifying the opinion which he is to give verbally, he may do so within the term of three days, these documents being filed with the rest of the reserved papers of the council.

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[166] In 1785 the authority of the viceroy over the Provincias Internas was partly restored, the reason given being the special acquaintance of the new viceroy, Bernardo de Gálvez, former governor of Louisiana, with the affairs of the northern frontier. At the same time the Provincias Internas were divided into three military districts. The first, including Texas, Coahuila, Nuevo León, and Nuevo Santander, was put under Juan de Ugalde, as *comandante inspector*; the second, embracing New Mexico and Nueva Viscaya, was put under José Rengel; the third, consisting of the western provinces, was put under Jacobo Ugarte y Loyola, the new *comandante-general*, to whom the other two officers were subordinate. In 1787 the three commands were reduced to two, the Provincias de Oriente being under Ugalde and the Provincias de Poniente under Ugarte y Loyola. Ugalde made several campaigns against the Apaches in western Texas, for which he became renowned. Pacheco became governor of Texas in 1789, and Diego de Borica that of California in 1794. Under Revilla Gigedo the younger, Antonio Bonilla was *secretario de cámara*, and did great service in arranging the archives of Mexico.

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[107] Manuel Merino became secretary to the *comandante-general* of the Interior Provinces.

The points which should be conferred upon in it are the following:

1. How long the nation of the Apache Indians has been known on these frontiers, and how long they have made war upon us.

2. What progress we have made with them, and especially within the last five years.

3. What number of warriors, by careful computation, is comprised in each one of the branches or bands of the Apaches whom we have hitherto known as Apaches Lipanes de Arriva, Apaches Lipanes de Abajo, Mescaleros, Natajes, or Lipiyanes, Faraones, Nabajòs, and Gileños; and what friendships and relationships these Indians have among each other.

4. What arms they use, where they live, on what they subsist, their method of making war, and in what provinces or places.

5. What avowed enemies the Apaches have among the heathen nations bordering on their territories, rancherías, or bands.

6. What opinion is merited by the treaties of peace which the Lipanes have made in this province; in what terms they are made, what disadvantages would come from maintaining these treaties, or from declaring war on the Lipanes.

7. What results, favorable or unfavorable, should be expected from the delivery of five Mescalero Indians made in the last general campaign by the Lipan chief, Poca Ropa, to the detachment under command of retired Lieutenant-colonel Don Vicente Rodriguez, and from that of two rancherías of the same nation just made by the Lipan chief Xavierillo to Captain Don Francisco Martinez.

8. With respect to the Comanches, Taoiayases,

Taguacanas, Texas, Vidais, Orcoquisàs, Atacapazes, and other Indians whom we know as the Nations of the North, each one of the voters will state what he understands and knows, and what may have come to his notice, arranging the reports and opinions under the first six points.

9. What ones of these nations are rovers, and what ones live in settlements, plant crops, etc.

10. What benefits might come from making war on these nations, allying ourselves with the Lipanes, or *vice versa*.

11. Whether the number of troops now guarding our frontiers will be sufficient to undertake the hostile operations, either against the Lipanes and other bands of the Apachería,[167a] or against the Indians of the North.

12. Whether an increase of forces is necessary, how much increase will be needed to go against the Apaches, and what against the northern Indians.

13. If against the Apaches, especially those of the East, the voters shall state whether it will be feasible to undertake one or several campaigns, general or local, how and under what conditions, at what seasons, to what posts or places, supposing ourselves allied with the Indians of the North.

14. And if against the latter, he shall give his opinion on the same points, with attention to the regions which they inhabit, to ours which they trouble, and to the success and the favorable results of the operations.

15. What means will be most suitable to pledge the good faith of the Lipanes in their alliance against those of the North, or that of the latter against the former.

16. Finally, each one of the voters should give his opinion concerning the measures which he considers

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[167a] The Apache country or the whole body of Apache.

useful in the interim, until the measures necessary to the general welfare of all the provinces can be taken, for the defense of this province and the neighboring ones of Nuevo Leon and La Colonia,[168] and the settlements of Saltillo and Parras, of the province of Nueva Vizcaya, counting only upon the troops of the presidios of La Babia, Agua-verde, Monclova, Rio Grande,[169] and the half-company of the flying squadron, and upon the coöperative movements which the neighboring troops of La Vizcaya may execute.

These are the principal points, and will open the way for many others which will arise by force of circumstances; and in order to treat them with all the clearness and order which they demand, each voter will speak and confer in his turn, each point being decided by majority vote. Coaguila, December 9, 1777.

El Cavallero de Croix.

[*Report of the Council at Monclova*]

Upon the first point all the voters stated that during the time they had served on these frontiers they had known no other avowed enemies than those comprising the Apache nation.

Upon the second they said that, far from progress having been made with the enemies, the very contrary has been the case; for, the settlements having been left helpless by the removal of the presidios from their neighborhood and by placing them at long distances in the frontier line,[170] the damages have been greater and more frequent than before, so that with good foundation it may be said that the war which the Indians are making upon us to-day is more severe and sanguinary than that which they waged in former times.

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[168] La Colonia del Nuevo Santander.

[169] All these places are in Coahuila. La Babia is sometimes confused with La Bahia in Texas.

[170] This is only one of many indications of hostility to the reorganization of the frontier made in consequence of the "New Regulation" of 1772.

With respect to the third point, all thought that, at a conservative estimate, the whole body of the Apaches would number as many as five thousand warriors; that the groups of Lipanes, Nabajós, and Gileños are the most numerous; that all are intermingled by relationship, alliance, and close friendship, especially the Lipan with the Natages, or Lipiyanes, and the Nabajós with the Gileños, (the Mescalero not being so closely related with the Lipanes, nor so firmly bound by friendship with the Lipiyanes); and that in consequence all unite in the hostilities against the dominions of the king.

On the fourth point all stated that the arms used by the Apaches in general consist of the arrow, lance, shield,[171] and firelock; that the Lipanes are abundantly supplied with these firelocks by the Vidais, Indians of the province of Texas; and that the rest of the Apaches have no other firearms than those which they steal from the Spaniards whom they kill; that these Lipanes, Natagés, and Mescaleros, are known as Apaches de Oriente [Eastern Apaches]; that the first live on both sides of the Rio Grande del Norte, under shelter of the presidios of San Juan Bautista, Monclova, and Santa Rosa de Aguaverde, part of them withdrawing at times to the Parage de la Nogalera;[172] that the Natages live regularly on the plains in the vicinity of the pueblo of El Paso and New Mexico, and sometimes with their relatives, the Lipanes; that the Mescaleros live in the mountains near the Bolson de Mapimí and within the same Bolson; that the Gileños have their rancherías in the sierras of the Gila, Mimbres, and various other places between the provinces of La Vizcaya and Sonora, and that the Navajós reside in the neighborhood of New Mexico; that all subsist through hunting deer and buffalo, and on the mules and horses which they take from us, excepting the Lipanes, who do not eat this kind of flesh; that they make war on us by surprises, and never enter an engagement unless they have a manifest advantage; that the Gileños alone make war on us in Sonora; that these and all the rest of the Apaches make attacks on La Vizcaya; the Nabajós, Gileños, and Lipiyanes on New Mexico; and all the rest of the Apaches named Eastern Apaches on the provinces of Coaguila, Nuebo Reyno de Leon, and Colonia del Nuevo Santander, marauding also in the province of Texas.

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[171] *Adargo ó chimal.*

[172] The Place of Walnuts, or pecans. See *footnote* 179.

On the fifth point all unanimously agreed that the Eastern Apaches have as implacable enemies the Comanches and the rest of the northern Indians, waging war also with the Yutas, Gileños, and Nabajoes, although the last named are accustomed to be friendly with them at times.

On the sixth point all agreed, without exception, that the treaties which the Lipanes have made on this frontier have been, are, and will always be false and deceitful, proving it by various events, well and publicly known, which they related as evidence of the bad faith of these Indians. Five of the voters said that treaties had recently been made under the condition that the Lipanes were to remain settled on the other side[173] of the Rio Grande del Norte; that they have never complied with them, any more than with their promise of friendship, the result being, instead of benefits, the almost entire ruin of this province and that of La Viscaya, through spoliation of ranch property, depopulation, and very frequent murders of the subjects of the king; that the maintenance of peace with these perfidious Indians is in no way desirable; but that before declaring war against them openly it will be necessary to increase the forces and to consider the operations well in order that the results may be beneficial and certain, for once succeeding in making this vile nation incapable of resisting our arms, whenever these shall be sufficient in number, the perfect tranquillity of the Interior Provinces, the increase of the dominions of the king, and the happiness of these subjects will be speedily assured.

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[173] That is, on the north side.

With respect to the seventh point, the majority of voters, all in fact, were of the opinion that the results of the deliveries of the Mescaleros made by the Lipanes will always be adverse, just as murders and robberies of subjects of the king have resulted from the delivery made by the Lipan Poca Ropa; and that the reason which the Lipanes will have for continuing their treasons against their friends and relatives will always be offspring of their own vengefulness, self interest, and avarice.

The majority of the voters stated with respect to the eighth point that they could not give opinions for lack of personal knowledge of the Nations of the North; but since Captain Don Rafael Martinez Pacheco possessed such knowledge, the Señor Commandant-general decided that he should accompany him to the province of Texas, where, in another council following this, the subject of the Indians of the North shall be treated, and that, having asked opinions of the governor of New Mexico,[174] where the Comanches commit depredations, these reports shall be added to the documents of the councils to be held, as bases of measures.

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[174] Juan Bautista de Anza, a man who deserves fame as the first explorer of an overland route from Sonora to the coast of Alta California and leader of the colony which in 1776 founded San Francisco.

With respect to the ninth point, the same opinion was given and agreed upon as with respect to the foregoing.

After a long and prolix conference held upon the tenth point, all the voters unanimously and alike expressed the opinion that the alliance of the Lipanes[175] against the Indians of the North would be very harmful, because, while we would not be free from the injuries which the Lipanes do us, we would suffer without recourse the greater damages which those of the North would do us, out of vengeance for their grievances; that this had been demonstrated by the shedding of much blood of religious and troops, ill payment for favor shown the perfidious Lipanes; but that with respect to the alliance with those of the North, God at once blessing the operations, the general pacification of the country ought to be expected, and perhaps even with little bloodshed, for if the Apaches were pressed in front by their irreconcilable enemies, the Northerners, it is quite possible that they would surrender to the mercy of our Catholic arms.

On the eleventh point, [it was the opinion] that the present forces are not able, because of their small number, either to undertake operations against the Apachería or to defend so extended a frontier.

On the twelfth point all said that to defend this province, according to its present state, and make war against the Lipanes and the rest of the Apaches, an increase of six hundred soldiers is necessary, in order that the total number guarding the frontier may reach eight hundred eighty men,[176] and since these opinions were the same as those submitted by the Señor Commandant-general to his Majesty in letter no. 119, sent through the most illustrious Señor Don Joseph de Galvez, the Señor Commandant-general ordered read that letter and the documents accompanying it, so that the proposals included might be conferred upon. All of these proposals were considered by all of the voters to be very useful, feasible, and advantageous to the service of the king, the increase of population, and the welfare of this province and those contiguous.

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[175] With the Spaniards.

[176] This would leave two hundred eighty men actually serving on a frontier some two thousand miles long.

After a long and detailed conference on the thirteenth point, all the voters agreed that a general campaign should be undertaken against the Eastern Apaches, and that, if God should bless it, it might be decisive, and result in the desired general peace of all the provinces.

In consequence of a difference of opinions, all being well founded, with respect to the question whether the campaign should be undertaken in the spring or in the fall, this point was left to be decided when the increase of troops available for the campaign should be made, assuming that opportune advices would always be secured from governors of this province and that of Texas.

All were of the opinion that for the campaign three thousand men are necessary, their operations to be detailed in the following way:

From the west the presidial and citizen soldiery of New Mexico shall set out and reconnoiter from the Sierra Oscura, by way of Sierra Blanca and neighboring lands, to the Sierra del Sacramento; the troops of La Vizcaya, in several large bodies will reconnoiter from the sierras of La Cola and El Aguila, Movano, and El Diablo, to that of Guadalupe, the country near their slopes, part of the plains (for the others should be reconnoitered by those of New Mexico), and the margins of the Rio Puerco[177] and the Rio Grande del Norte, as far as the Rio de San Pedro, inclusive.

From the south detachments from La Nueva Vizcaya will enter the Bolson de Mapimi, try to dislodge the enemies from those ranges, and go to the presidios of San Carlos and San Savas,[178] and from the same direction will pass troops from Coahuila to examine the Sierra del Pino, these and the former detachments serving afterward to cover the entrances to the same Sierra del Pino, the Rio de San Pedro, Ojas de las Nuezes, and Agua Amargosa.

From the north will come the troops of the province of Texas with the Indian allies and auxiliaries of the North. Part of this body will remain to hold the Cañon de San Savas and Nogalera,[179] necessary and well known refuges of the Lipanes; and the rest will execute the attack on the front from north to south, three strong detachments being placed in the presidios of San Juan Bautista del Rio Grande, Monclova, and Aguaverde.

All the detachments of the south and west will have for their object the reconnoitering of the country of the Mescaleros and Natagés Apaches, in order to force them to seek asylum and safety in union with the Lipanes, because in this way only can all or the larger part of the Eastern Apaches be confined to the small district which intervenes between our frontier of Coaguila and the territories inhabited by their enemies, the Indians of the North. The same detachments will serve to cut off the retreat of the Apaches and to cause them to take refuge in their asylums.

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[177] The Pecos.

[178] At that time in Coahuila, having been suppressed in Texas about 1770.

[179] The valley of the Upper Nueces.

The detachments from the North, which are the ones that must make the attack, will, no doubt, force the greater part of the Apaches to seek asylum in the presidios of Rio Grande, Monclova, and Aguaverde, whose troops will serve to put the Apaches between two fires, if they should remain obstinate, or to protect them within these presidios if they should surrender at discretion. In the latter case they will be treated with all the mildness recommended by the incomparable and sovereign mercy of our Catholic monarch. This will leave the eastern country without other troops than those which suffice to garrison the frontiers of Texas and the Colony of Nuevo Santandér; but once the Apaches go to seek the coast nothing is left for them except to die or surrender.

Finally, it was agreed in the council that, this one being concluded, the one to follow in San Antonio de Bexar, and the one to be held in the villa of Chihuahua, shall arrange the minute details of this campaign, which will secure the happiness of these provinces; for, even though the total subjection of the Apaches should not be effected, they will be reduced to a small number, conquerable with fewer troops and less anguish, and with very slight damage compared with the grave, repeated, cruel injuries which are now suffered and which threaten the entire ruin of the country if it is not prevented promptly.

On the fourteenth and fifteenth points all the voters said that, assuming that the war was to be made against the Lipanes and the rest of the Apaches, the friendship of the Indians of the North should be cultivated at once, attracting them through their own interest in punishing the common enemy and by other means which might be considered adapted to secure their good faith;

but that this matter could be treated with greater practical knowledge and greater experience with the Nations of the North in the council to be held in the presidio of San Antonio de Bejar.

With respect to the last point put before the council, they agreed, first, that the general increase of troops being effected, the first company of the Legion del Principe[180] should be stationed in the Valley of Santa Rosa, sending [from it] a detachment of twenty-five men to the Parage de San Joseph to cover this uninhabited transit which serves as an entrance for the enemies; another of thirty men to the head of the Springs of Santa Rita, a place capable of sustaining a large settlement; and another of twenty-five to the Villa Nueva de San Fernando,[181] which will promote this place.

The second company, in Quatro Cienegas, where a settlement could be established; taking [from it] a detachment of thirty men to be placed in Sardiñas, in order that, in its shelter, another pueblo may be formed; and the same number of men to cover the Hacienda del Carmen.

The third company in Coaguila, sending [from it] a detachment of forty men to the pueblo of Santiago Valladares; another of thirty to the Hacienda del Alamo; another of fifteen to the Rancho del Tapado; another of twenty-five men to Anelo; and one of ten to La Noria de la Hoya.

This distribution of the troops and those which may be added to the presidios are those best adapted, according to common agreement of the voters of the council, to undertake the detailed general action, continue the other special campaigns which may be necessary, and protect this province and the contiguous ones of Nuevo Reyno de Leon and the Colonia del Nuevo Santandér from the insults of the Indians, this last province providing a detachment of forty men from the company which guards it in the Pueblo de Laredo.[182]

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[180] Legion of the Prince.

[181] San Fernando de Austria, near the Rio Grande.

In order that the small number of men which now defends this province may be useful as distributed, it was agreed in the council that, taking advantage of the convenient opportunity afforded by the surprise made on the two rancherías of Mescaleros by Captain Don Francisco Martinez, an officer satisfactory to the Señor Commandant-general shall be commissioned to treat of and procure the exchange of the persons captured, making use of the very Lipanes who delivered them, both for this purpose and also to attract to peace the Mescalero Apaches, the former becoming guarantors of the actions of the latter.

If this succeeds, which all the voters think quite possible, there will result, in the common opinion, a minimum of hostilities in this province, because the Lipanes will have no cause to excuse their bad actions toward the Mescaleros; both these tribes, by means of the good treatment and presents, which ought to be paid for from the gratification funds of the presidial companies, according as shall be determined upon by the Señor Commandant-general, will sleep in the arms of confidence until we are able to declare war against them. And, finally, for the entire success of all the important ends which have been agreed upon in regard to this and the other points, the voters were of the opinion that rumors of good friendship with the Apaches should be cunningly and craftily propagated, in keeping with the friendship which they profess for us; and, in a word, that all the talk of the voters should be so directed that the public will think that exactly the contrary of what was really done in this council. Under this supposition the troops now in the province shall be distributed for the necessary defense of the territory in the following way:

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[182] Laredo was and is a town on the Texas side of the Rio Grande about one hundred seventy-five miles above the mouth of the Rio Grande. It was founded in May, 1755, by José de Escandon. See Bolton in the Texas *Historical Quarterly*, Jan., 1903, 187-203.

From the presidios of La Babia and Aguaverde there shall be taken, as half, a detachment of thirty men, and from Monclova, five, to the Valle de Santa Rosa; another of twenty-five men to the Villa Nueva de San Fernando, taking ten from the garrison of La Monclova and fifteen from that of the Rio Grande, and placing that of the Valle de Santa Rosa (whose fatigues will be shared by the three which are in the province) in charge of a captain, and that of the Villa Nueva[188] under the command of a subaltern. These two detachments will reconnoiter promiscuously as far as the Parage de San Joseph.

Of the half of the flying company a captain and thirty-five men shall be placed in Quatro Cienegas; another detachment of sixteen, including a subaltern, in Sardiñas; four men in the mines of Potrerillos; and the same number in Coaguila, under the orders of the governor.

These last measures cannot be put into effect until the Señor Commandant-general returns from the presidio of San Antonio de Bejár, when his Lordship shall issue such orders as he may think proper and report to his Majesty everything agreed upon in this council of war for his royal approval. And thus the president and the voters of the council agreed and signed, in the Villa de Monclova, December 11, 1777.

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[188] San Fernando de Austria.

DON JUAN DE UGALDE
VICENTE RODRIGUEZ
ANTONIO BONILLA
RAFAEL MARTINEZ PACHECO
FRANCISCO MARTINEZ
JUAN ANTONIO SERRANO
MANUEL CEREZEDO Y VELASCO
DIEGO DE BORICA
DOMINGO DIAZ

Done before me,

MANUEL MERINO Y MORENO, *secretary of the council.*

[*Report of the Council at San Antonio de Béxar*]

In the council of war ordered called and held this day by the Señor Don Teodoro de Croix, governor and commandant-general of the Interior Provinces of New Spain, etc., there being present the Señor Colonel Baron de Ripperdá, governor of this province, the Adjutant-inspector Don Antonio Bonilla, secretary of the commandancy-general, and the captains Don Rafael Martinez Pacheco, Don Luis Cazorla,[184] and Don Domingo Diaz; after having read what was agreed upon and resolved in the preceding council held in the Villa de Santiago de Monclova on the eleventh of last December,

Luis Cazorla

[*Facsimile of the signature of Luis Cazorla. From the original in the Béxar Archives*] and the documents which were present for the consideration of that council, the voters of this council agreed and resolved upon what is stated hereinafter concerning each one of the points ordered by the superior preliminary decree submitted to both councils.

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[184] Luis Cazorla was for several years captain of the presidio of La Bahía del Espíritu Santo. See the account of his expedition to the lower Trinity in 1772. Other references to his activities between 1770 and 1780 will be found in Bolton, *Abandonment and Reoccupation of East Texas, passim.*

Concerning the first seven points the voters concurred in what was agreed upon and decided in the first council, asserting that the peace which the Apaches have professed for many years in this province is as deceitful and injurious as that which they have observed in the province of Coaguila, although it is attended by greater simulation, they being fearful, perhaps, of the nearness of their enemies, the Nations of the North.

Regarding the eighth point the voters stated first, that some of the Nations of the North have been known in this province since the latter part of the past century, when the first entry or discovery was made.

Second, that neither these nations nor those which have since become known committed any depredations in these territories until the Apaches Lipanes were sheltered by the presidio of San Savas, whence they went out to maraud the Nations of the North; and finally, that these Indians continued with greater vigor their irruptions as a result of, or out of vengeance for, the campaign which was made against them in the fort of the Taoiayazes by Colonel Don Diego Ortiz Parrilla.

Third, that the insults of the Nations of the North have been more sensible and harmful since they have come to have as faithful spies the Xaraname Indians, fugitives from the mission of Espiritu Santo, who moved the said nations to avenge the injury which they received from some soldiers who misunderstood an order issued by the deceased Captain Don Francisco Továr, captain of the presidio of La Bahía del Espíritu Santo.

Fourth, that in view of the present sad situation of this province, Colonel Baron de Ripperdá, its governor, employed the father president of the missions, Fray Pedro Ramírez, and the commandant of the presidio of Nachitoches, Don Atanasio de Mecieres, to make treaties with the Indians of the North, which was successfully accomplished, various chiefs having come to ratify the treaty in this presidio of San Antonio de Vexár.

Fifth, that although some have groundlessly regarded these treaties as deceitful, all the nations except the Comanches have scrupulously kept them.

Sixth, that these Indians are the only declared enemies known in this province, where no further progress can be made, both because it is impeded by the depredations of the Comanches, and because of the repeated and incessant thieveries of the Apaches; adding, finally, that the Carancaguazes Indians of the coast commit robberies and depredations in the vicinity of the presidio of La Bahía del Espíritu Santo, to whose missions the families of the fugitive Xaranames and some of the Carancaguazes have begun to return, the former voluntarily, the latter perforce.

With respect to the number of warriors comprised in the Nations of the North, combining the reports which one of the voters has with what the governor of the province stated and with the reports which exist in the archives of the secretariat of the commandancy-general, it was thought that:

The Texas nation must have warriors to the number of	300
The Vidais	70
The Taovayases	500
The Taguacanes	250
The Yscanis	50
The Quitseigns	90
Carried over	1260

Brought over	1260
The Tancagues	300
The Orcoquisaéz	50
The Ayses	30
The Aovages	600
The Xaranames	40
	2280
And the Comanche nation, whose name is applied generically to various groups of Indians	5000[185]
Total	7280

All these nations have always maintained mutual friendship, although recently war has been declared between the Comanches, Taguacanas, and Tancagues, and the numerous nations of the Guazas, who live farther inland toward the north and are hostile to all these nations.

With respect to kinship, the Vidais nation is related to the Orcoquisaz[186] and the Taguacana to the Taoiayazes and the Yscanis.

With respect to the ninth point all the voters said that according to the information now possessed concerning the Nations of the North, only the Taguacanas, Taoiayazes, Yscanes, Ays, and Texas live in settlements and plant crops; and that no nation recognizes a superior, or governing head, except when they go to war against their enemies or defend themselves against them.

That some of these chiefs have been appointed as such by the governor of this province or that of Luisiana, or by the commandant of the presidio of Nachitos; and likewise that they use the flag of Spain with the Burgundian cross, carrying their canes and medals of merit left in that province of Luisiana by Lieutenant-general Conde de Orreylli.

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[185] Compare the estimates given by De Mésières, in *Document* 167. Gaignard gave the number of Naytane warriors alone as over four thousand. See *Document* 136.

[186] With respect to this point see *Handbook of American Indians*, "San Francisco Xavier de Horcasitas."

Finally, the weapons which these Indians use consist of English and French guns, which they manage dextrously and with which they are almost always abundantly provided (for they have them to spare and to sell in this presidio, as has been done), pikes, or lances, bows and arrows, axes or *macanas*[187] made by Europeans, the chimal, or shield, and leather jackets.

With respect to the questions which are asked in points ten to fourteen, inclusive, all the voters of this council concurred in the opinions expressed, agreed upon, and resolved in the council held in Coaguila, regarding as sufficient the increase of troops assigned to this province by the plan formed by the Señor Commandant-general and reported to the king in letter number 119, adding only that when the time shall come to detail and begin the general campaign against the Apaches, there shall be taken into consideration the opinion which the Señor Colonel Baron de Ripperdá gave on July third of last year and that which ought to be requested, when occasion arises, of Lieutenant-colonel Don Atanasio de Mecieres, commandant of the presidio of Nachitoches.

In order to bring about the alliance with the Nations of the North and to make sure of the good faith of these Indians, it was agreed, first, that, without publishing the plans meditated, and without making any change in the treatment of the Lipanes, the friendship of those nations should continue to be cultivated as formerly.

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[187] *Macana*, a wooden weapon in use among the ancient Indians of Mexico and Peru, generally edged with a sharp flint [Valázquez de la Cadena, *New Pronouncing Dictionary*, 1904]. "A weapon of the Indians, without blade, and having at the two ends what resemble two sharp spathes. It is made of very heavy wood, so that with a blow one can easily kill a person with it, as the Indians have done with many of their missionaries. I have seen one in the house of the inquisitive and learned Señor Conde de Saceda, with which an Indian killed three of his masters, among them a bishop. The one used by the Caribs the French call Boutau. In Latin they call it *Ensis indicus ligneus*; but the one which I have seen has no sort of knife or sword. The *macanas* of many Indians are made of a palm called *achonta*, and are of various forms." [De Terreros y Pando, *Diccionario Castellano* (Madrid, 1787).]

Secondly, that the presents and favors which with due prudence and moderation should be accorded to each of the tribes of Indians, should be charged to the gratification fund of the company.

Third, that as a means of authorizing these expenses, as may be necessary, the governor of the province shall issue an order to the agent of the company, who shall make a detailed and appropriate statement of the account, and with the approval of the governor it shall be sent at the end of the year to the Señor Commandant-general, in order that he may arrange for reimbursement.

Fourth, that in order to make sure of the friendship of the Indians of the North and to keep them grateful and disposed to join a campaign against the Apaches when the increase of our troops, their due arrangement, and their distribution shall have been effected, Lieutenant-colonel Don Atanasio de Mecieres shall be commissioned, in virtue of the order of the Señor Governor of Luisiana, Don Bernardo de Galvez, to whom the appropriate despatch shall be sent by the Señor Commandant-general.

Fifth, that to the governor of Luisiana shall be sent with the said despatch a literal copy of the proceedings of these councils, of the representation made to his Majesty, under number 119, of the plan formed by the Señor Commandant-inspector, Don Joseph Rubio, and of the proposed legion of the king, in order that, in view of these documents, his Majesty may be pleased to furnish such auxiliaries as he can, in case he should deign to approve what is agreed upon and resolved in these councils.

And sixth, that, permission being granted by the Señor Governor of Luisiana to the commandant of the presidio of Nachitoches, Don Atanasio de Mecieres, he shall also permit him to come without delay to this presidio, with suitable orders, to confer and treat with the Señor Governor of this province concerning the best method of cultivating the friendship of the Nations of the North, pledging their useful alliance, and disposing them to aid in the projected general campaign against the Apaches. For this purpose there shall remain in the possession of the Señor Governor of this province another copy of the proceedings of this council,[188] which he shall keep locked and sealed until the arrival of the said De Mecieres, who, being instructed in all decided upon, shall set forth and send to the Señor Commandant-general his opinion with respect to the time when the general campaign should be made, the places where the Indians of the North should make the attack, the number of divisions or detachments of these auxiliaries which should be formed, of our troops which should accompany them, and of the auxiliaries which it may be necessary to furnish the friendly Indians, and with respect to everything which the zeal, intelligence, and honor of the commandant of Nachitoches may consider adapted to the successful outcome of the enterprise.

Meanwhile, the service which at present the troops of this province are now performing being the only kind which can be undertaken to prevent the depredations of the enemies, the distribution of the additional troops in the places necessary and useful for the defense of the country and the increase of population shall be deferred for a more suitable time. Thus the president and members of the council agreed and signed in the presidio of San Antonio de Bejar, on the fifth of January, 1778.

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[188] The original document referred to is still in the Béxar archives, where I have used it.

EL CAVELLERO DE CROIX RAFAEL MARTINEZ PACHECO
EL BARON DE RIPPERDA LUIS CAZORLA
ANTONIO BONILLA DOMINGO DIAZ

Done before me,

MANUEL MERINO Y MORENO, *secretary of the council.*

[Endorsement] Compared with the original, which is in the secret archive of the secretariat of the commandancy-general in my charge, to which I certify. San Antonio de Bejar, January 5, 1778.

ANTONIO BONILLA [rubric].

166. JOSE DE GALVEZ [189] TO CROIX
JANUARY 20, 1778 [190]

In a letter dated at Zacatecas on the eleventh of last September, your Lordship again informs me that you have asked the viceroy of New Spain for the reinforcement of two thousand men, adding that on account of awaiting his reply you have been continuing your journey slowly, and that your Lordship expects the viceroy's consent; finally you set forth the plan of operations which you have considered for combating and annihilating the Apaches of the east, counting on the aid of the commander of the presidio of Natchitoches and a corps of three hundred or four hundred hunters of Luisiana commanded by the governor of that province, Colonel Don Bernardo de Galvez. All this I have reported to the king, and his Majesty, being informed, orders me to repeat to your Lordship that he approved the reply given by the viceroy on August 27 last; that your Lordship must by now have received the official communications which he sent you from Queretaro asking for the two thousand soldiers; and that he again informs your Lordship that when you shall report upon your own knowledge the state of the Interior Provinces, of your command, his Majesty will determine the fixed allowance with which he will assist you. Nevertheless, the viceroy was advised that his Majesty hoped that he would give your Lordship such reinforcements as he considered just and necessary, all of which I reported to your Lordship in order of December 29, ultimo.

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[189] José de Gálvez, brother of Viceroy Matias de Gálvez, was born of poor parents in Vélez-Malaga in 1729. He was educated at the University of Alcalá and later became private secretary of the Marqués de Grimaldi. In 1761, while an *intendente* in the royal army, he was sent to New Spain as *visitador general*, with instructions to inspect and reorganize the administration. In 1764 he was given powers superior to those of the viceroy, and before his return to Spain in 1771 he supervised the expulsion of the Jesuits from New Spain and sent out the Portolá expedition to occupy Alta California. He also recommended the establishment of the intendant system in New Spain and the organization of the Provincias Internas [see *footnote* 165], which reforms were carried out after his return to Spain. In 1768 he was made a member of the Council of the Indies, and later became *Ministro Universal de Indias*, which position he held until his death in 1787. He was also given the title of the Marqués de Sonora. [Bancroft, *Mexico*, vol. iii, 367.]

[190] Bancroft Coll., Louisiana.

With respect to the auxiliaries which your Lordship proposes from the governor of Luisiana and the presidio of Natchitoches, his Majesty commands me to inform you that in the present circumstances[191] the presence of that governor in his province is most important; but that nevertheless, with respect to what aid he is able to give your Lordship with the friendly Indian Nations of the North and by means of the commander and the garrison of Natchitoches, your Lordship may correspond with that governor, to whom under this date the proper order is given, to the end that he may assist in the at-

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[191] The American Revolution is alluded to here.

tempt to make war upon the Apaches of the frontiers of those provinces near his colony, with such efforts and means as will not weaken the forces and posts of his command. All this I communicate to your Lordship at his Majesty's order, for your intelligence and guidance. May God preserve your Lordship many years. El Pardo, January 20, 1778. JOSEPH DE GALVEZ.
Señor Don Teodoro de Croix.

[Endorsement] I certify that this is a literal copy of the original royal order which is in the secretariat of the commandancy-general in my charge. Chihuagua, September 10, 1778. ANTONIO BONILLA [rubric].

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167. DE MEZIERES TO THE VICEROY
FEBRUARY 20, 1778[192]

[*Plan for a Campaign against the Apaches*]

Being informed of the sixteen points submitted by the Señor Commandant-general to the councils which have been held in the villas of Monclova and Bejar for their decision, and desiring to do, in so far as my short experience may fit me, what was commanded by your Lordship in respect to some of the points expressed, and to give my opinion in regard to others, I must begin with a relation making known the Nations of the North, with whom it deals, their situation, life, alliances, wars, weapons, forces, and the manner in which to employ these tribes in our service.

Considering the nations beyond the presidio of San Antonio de Bejar, they can be divided into three classes: the maritime or southern; the inland, or eastern; and the frontier, or northern, the last of which alone are useful for the project in question.

The first class is composed of the Atacapa and Orcoquizaes, who are found at the mouths of the Nechas and Trinity Rivers. They are without fixed residence, do not cultivate the soil, are the least numerous, and the least to be esteemed for any arduous undertaking, because, since they live under the protection of the other tribes, who free them from every attack, they never take up arms except to hunt. This class is contiguous to and allied with other wandering Indians, namely the Caranames,[103] a low, cowardly tribe, unworthy of note, unless it be on account of the constant surprise attacks which they are accustomed to make with impunity upon the shipwrecked voyagers of the Gulf of Mexico, where they make their forays.

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[192] *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 228-238.

In the next[104] class are comprised the Adaes, Vidaes, and Texas. The first-named tribe, almost extinct since the last epidemic, and given extremely to the vice of drunkenness, cannot be useful or of any advantage. The second, stricken by the same misfortune and raising no crops, lead a miserable, vagabond life, and the exhortations, example, and arguments of the Spaniards fail to lead them to better things. The third [the Texas] are divided into various bands, known under the names Azinays, Nevadizoes, Nadacogs, and Nacogdoches. They speak the same language, and are related to each other. They are very industrious in agriculture, are lovers of and beloved by the Spaniards, and are ready to serve them with that efficiency that they proved in 1730 (which may still be remembered in Lusiana), when the hostile Natches invaded the territory of the Natchitoches and perished by their arms.

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[103] It is evident that Carancaguases [Karankawas] are meant here. This is inferred from the description, especially the part referring to the plundering of wrecked ships, and from the fact that the Xaranames (written "Caranamés" by de Mézières in *Document* 1) are below included in the Nations of the North.

[104] *Imedata, o primera* – obviously a mistake, either of the author or of the copyist.

To the third class belong the Tancagues, Tuacanas, Xaranames, Quitseys, and Toauyaces,[195] who, after a perfidious and bloody war, went, repentant, to Ripperda, the governor of Texas, and obtained from him, in the name of the king, the peace which they gladly maintain. Then come the Ouass or Mahas,[196] who came down a short time ago from the borders of the Misuris River, on which their villages were established, and joined the Taoriayaces.[197]

Finally, there are the Comanches, who are the only ones hostile to us. They are Indians surpassed by none in numbers, in modesty of dress, in hospitality to their guests, in humanity to their captives, or in bravery, which is so general that even in the women the most virile sort of valor has been observed. But as they have so great a propensity to steal, which obscures their good qualities, one notices nothing but the injuries which they inflict. This propensity is to be imputed, however, not so much to their preverseness, as to their ever-wandering mode of life. Lacking the trade of the Europeans, and not devoting themselves to agriculture, they have no other clothing or food than that secured from the wild cattle, which they follow, now into mild countries, when the frosts drive them from the north, now in that direction, when the heat impels them toward the cold regions. From these perpetual oscillations and such continual movement, they lose a great many horses, for which loss they try to compensate themselves at the expense of the ranches which they encounter in Texas and Mexico.

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[195] It will be noted that by De Mézières the Cadodacho, Hasinai [Texas], Bidai, and Arkokisa, are excluded from the Nations of the North, which he uses to include the Tonkawa, Wichita, Comanche, and Panis-mahas. This is a narrower usage than the ordinary one.

[196] This name is variously written Aguajes, Ouases, Avaes, Ovaes, Ouass, Obages.

[197] Probably a miscopy for Taovayaces.

The only remedy for these intolerable excesses will be found in keeping stable and quiet the people from which they proceed, by means of our trade, to which they aspire, or, if such a mild expedient should prove fruitless, by force of arms.

This last class, except the Tancagues and Comanches, live in their respective villages, and raise crops of maize, beans, calabashes, and tobacco; they sustain themselves also with the flesh of the buffalo, deer, and bear, which they say is savory. They raise very abundant harvests in their territory. They recognize chiefs, under whose command they sally forth to make war, sometimes against the Osagues, Indians further inland, to the north, and sometimes against the Apaches—both implacable enemies [of this], and also of the other classes mentioned.

All use with great dexterity the bow and arrow, the lance, the sword, the dagger, and fire-arms, and have for defensive arms the leather shield and a kind of heavy cap which serves them for a helmet. All are skillful in the management of the horse, to the raising of which they devote themselves. All observe a religion which takes the form of sacrificing the scalps of their enemies and the first of their own fruits to the ridiculous objects of their idolatry. All visit each other and they observe mutual friendship, although that of the Comanches is accustomed to alteration; but it is renewed in a short time, for, being impelled by necessity, they do not hesitate to sell the horses which the others lack on account of the frequent robberies which they experience from the Apaches and Osagues, and the loss of which they can supply only by the trade of the Comanches.

By means of the trade which they enjoy with the Spaniards of Lusiana, they provide themselves with powder, balls, guns, cloth, blankets, axes, pots, knives, vermillion, and other goods used by them, which they get in exchange for buckskin and the hides of deer, bear, and buffalo, and for tallow and lard. Such activities are important, not so much on account of the profit which results from them, as for the fact that the Indians, exerting themselves in securing these things, have no time for idleness, from which serious consequences might originate; and because by the benefit [of this trade] they are bound more closely to our nation, with whom they enjoy it.

In each of their villages, not including the Comanches, there resides a Spanish merchant of Natchitoches, well-versed in writing, skilled in the language of the Indians with whom he deals, acceptable to them, and the best fitted obtainable to inculcate in them the love and respect which it is desired that they should have for us. It is his duty to watch over their conduct, maintain the general union, and report without delay anything of interest to the service of his Majesty and the tranquillity of his subjects.

Keeping it clearly in mind that the large, indomitable tribe of the Osagues continually harasses the inhabitants of Lusiana, in whose territories, principally those bathed by the Arcanzas and Nachitoches Rivers, they become more notorious each day on account of their treachery and rapine, it will be seen how important it is to keep favorable to our Indians those who, thus far, are the only ones to whom we are indebted for avenging these injuries, this being a result of the advantageous situation in which they have located, by our influence, where they maintain a cordon which defends us, even with great injury to themselves.[188]

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[188] The implication is that the tribes had formed the cordon that De

Knowing, likewise, of the proximity of the English, now in possession of the eastern bank of the immense river of San Luis or Misicipi, whence, impelled by their genial boldness, they strive to enter the dominions of his Majesty, with the intention of subverting the natives, evident is our obligation not to displease these natives. For, just as they now despise the insinuations and offers of the English, so might they substitute evil intentions for such good ones, should we be guilty of some shortcoming on our part while they find none in the greedy foreigner with respect to aid or even with respect to refuge from the persecutions which might be provoked in order to punish their own faults.

And since their hostility toward the Apaches is so great, as has been said, is there any doubt that, with the greatest pleasure and zeal, they would join the proposed campaign against them, flattering themselves that under the protection of our unconquered banners they may cooperate in the complete destruction of such hateful enemies, after which they may more easily face and resist the Osagues?

In order to maintain this worthy undertaking as secret as is required, it is necessary that only by superior order the necessary information be given to the nations of which we are attempting to make use. At the same time, it is necessary that when such intelligence arrives it may be in territory where the enemy may not get wind of the least movement. In view of this fact, the most suitable place in which we can meet by appointment is the village of the Taobaianes: (1) because it has a larger population than others; (2) because at a short distance are the neighboring tribes who will aid us

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Mézières had designed in 1772, but there is little evidence to show that this is true.

with their own people; (3) because it is further removed from the Vidaes, whose long-standing friendship with the Apaches does not permit–I mean, gives no little cause to suspect that upon hearing the least noise of arms they would make it known to the latter, and thus frustrate success; (4) finally, there being only uninhabited country between the village of the Taobaianes and the lands in which the enemy lives, the march will be more secret, and, consequently, the expedition more successful.

The reason which prompts dissimulation with the Vidays dictates that the same reserve be maintained with the Texas–since they are the friends and neighbors of the former–giving them to understand, for their satisfaction, in case they should be displeased at not having been invited, that there will not be lacking another occasion to show them substantial proofs of our confidence.

The most plausible pretext for maintaining among the Taovaianes the officer and troops that may be sent there, until the moment shall arrive for divulging the true reason, is that, since the insults of their enemies are so grave and incessant, the Señor Commandant-general of the Interior Provinces of the northeast has determined, in accord with the Señor Governor of Lusiana, that there shall be and reside with them, until some other disposition is made, a subaltern officer who has their confidence, in order that he may aid, advise, and console them when occasion may arise. This pretext, far from estranging them, will cause good feeling; and as soon as they see the officer referred to preparing frequent detachments to explore the land, making in person repeated scouting expeditions, and making every effort possible to meet and punish the Osagues, they will be inclined to believe that this necessary service is designed solely for their own benefit, and they will desire nothing so much as to repay us with the most valuable assistance.

This officer will give close attention to attracting the Comanches, keeping watch of them, fondling and making use of the powerful influence of the Taovaianes and Mahas in order to win their affection. It appears quite possible that on account of the good treatment which they will receive, and through having been witnesses of such intercourse [with the Taovayas], as well as because they themselves are witnesses of the martial bearing of the Spaniards, they will abstain from giving cause for complaints, from which they will expect results little favorable.

When the Indians are told of the campaign, prudence should be used in the selection of persons who wish to enlist, both because all would desire to do so, whereby the villages would remain exposed to the invasions of the Osages, and because serious embarrassment would be occasioned by enlisting those who, on account of their great age or youth, or of their unfitness, should be considered less useful for a wearisome march than for the defense of their villages.

In order to animate these Indians, to keep them as far as possible in due subordination, to obtain from their aid the benefit promised, without giving them reason to think that we depend too much upon it, and to provide for an honorable retreat without our forces being censured (in case they should not have such success as is anticipated, which should always be guarded against), the Indians should be accompanied by about three hundred Spaniards. Some of these should come from the commandancy-general and some from Lusiana, because there will result from this arrangement the wide-spread and firm impression that both dominions belong to a single monarch, which the rude intellects of these remote nations comprehend with difficulty, and this will increase their love, respect, and gratitude for us.

The most opportune time to take them on the campaign is early in September, when the Indians finish their harvests. In the spring the rains are troublesome; in summer, the heat; and, in winter, the cold.

It is necessary that, with the auxiliaries of each village, the Spanish merchants in them should assemble, in order that, by means of their knowledge of the language and their especial acquaintance with the individuals, the prompt dispatch of operations may be facilitated.

It is no less important that there should be in the village of the Taovaianes a sufficient supply of provisions for the troops that may be stationed there; for, although the lands are fertile and the Indians industrious, the harvest might fail, or be insufficient to feed the allies, who, when they are summoned, will undoubtedly come without other preparation than their weapons.

Since it is very common for these natives to go unprepared with supplies when they set out to war–from which it arises that, not finding an abundance of cattle, they readily desist from their purpose on account of hunger, or, the contrary being the case, defeat their purpose by the continuous signs left by their noisy and slow march–therefore, rations should be supplied to our auxiliaries, some in the village of the Taovaianes, some in other places, as local experience may dictate; for if this is not done they will either separate into little bands in search of food, or will return to their villages, greatly dissatisfied, and with small esteem for our foresight.

One great essential will consist of a gift of ammunition and war-supplies, which should be made with economy, intelligence, and at a convenient time, to the chiefs and principal men. This gift, if made to those who will use it against the common enemy, will cause them to be grateful, will serve them as pay, and will redound to the benefit of the king.

The Indians should be enlisted in the following manner: Taauvaiazes, 250; Ovaes, or Mahas, 250; Juacanas and Yscanis, 150; Xaranames and Tancagues, 150; Comanches, 300; [making a total of] 1000 [1100] men.

Since the hostilities which the Comanches have committed against the presidios of his Majesty and the estates of his vassals are so scandalous and so notorious, a proposal to repair to hands which have shed our blood, in order that they may shed the blood of other enemies, seems strange. But, fix attention upon the conduct of these Comanches toward the Apaches. They persecute them with such constant war, that they have driven them far from the said presidios and estates, which the Apache also were molesting; and not being able to find them, they become angry and even suspect us of concealing them. They will therefore form so favorable an opinion [of us] that, with the greatest eagerness and gratitude, they will exert themselves to search for and attack such mortal enemies. It will be reasoned that if the Apaches are also our enemies it is because we resist their robberies, just as they are their own enemies on account of the long standing and unconquerable hatred which they have for them. It can be assured, considering what is known of the Indians and of their customs, that the most effective mode of securing the desired reduction of the Comanches will be to have them as companions on the campaign, because from such comradeship results the name of *Techán* among the natives, which suggests that of *commilito*,[199] with which the Romans were flattered. There arises among those who call themselves by this name a strong tie of friendship, and the common opinion that no one can change it without fear of incurring the penalty which such perjurors deserve. Lastly, what greater glory can there be for us than to have as witness of the success of our arms those who in Bejar and Bahia del Espiritu Santo were punished by them? And what greater cause for love than the fact that when we could use our arms to their ruin, we deign to direct theirs for the ruin of their enemies?

The matter of the Comanches will be concluded by saying that in case that, awake from the lethargy in which we torpidly maintain ourselves after three centuries of conquest, we may deign to undertake, by means of the exploration of the Misuris River, that of the neighboring Asia, whence, by a different route, it is probable that the Russians are approaching.[200] By the river on our border the English, being invited by our indolence, must do the same. And what advantage may we not promise ourselves from the Comanches, now masters in the region which must be crossed to get to the banks of this large-volumed river, since their alliance, companionship, aid, knowledge, and intrepidity are adapted to overcome the difficulties which offer themselves in this laudable though depreciated undertaking?

The troops which the commandancy-general may furnish should await those sent from Lusiana between the Colorado and San Sabá Rivers, establishing their camp there on the pretext of preventing the incursions of the Comanches, but with orders not to use arms against them unless they should be attacked, in view of the progress which may have been made toward an alliance with them.

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[199] This word *Techás* seems to be the same as Texas, or Techas, meaning allies or friends. The accents written by De Mézières are French accents, and do not indicate stress of voice, but quality of the vowels. See the article under "Texas" in *Handbook of American Indians*, part ii.

[200] See a reference to Asiatics, pages 211, 229.

The notice to be given to the troops residing in the Taovaiazes to the effect that they are to come with the Indians to unite with the foregoing troops, can not have results in less than a month. This time is considered necessary to notify the neighboring nations and to await their gathering.

After both bodies of troops have assembled, they will be divided into two corps, in order that one may march direct to San Saba, the other going below El Cañón,[201] so that after these districts have been reconnoitered, the first division may go towards the junction of Rio[202] Puerco with the Rio Grande, the asylum most frequented by the Lipan, and the second, to the district of the Presidio of the Rio Grande, or to Monclova, to meet and overcome, not only the mentioned Lipán, but also the Mescaleros and other Apaches who may have united with them, as they flee from the attack of the other divisions. It is well understood that to assure the success of these combined marches, faithful and intelligent guides must be sent from Bexar.

In the province of Lusiana there are discharged officers from the troops of his most Christian Majesty, who served with great zeal and renown in the last wars of El Canadá, and whose experience and skill in the management of the Indians makes it desirable that they should be employed in the command of the troops that are to come from that province. A part of these should be chosen from among the hunters and the Canadians, since they are a frugal and untiring class, expert in crossing the country and the rivers, learned in many useful crafts, such as blacksmithing, carpentry, etc., and very much liked by the Indians with whom they have been reared. From them may be expected courage equal to that which they have always manifested in the course of the wars referred to.

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[201] The reference is to the Cañon of San Joseph in the upper Nueces River, where the two missions of San Lorenzo and Candelaria were founded in 1762. See Map.

[202] The Pecos.

Their weapons (conforming to their genius and custom) should consist of a short, light fusil, a hatchet, a dagger, a sabre, a pair of blunderbusses, and a lance; to these there should be added a shield like that carried by the presidials for protection against arrows.

Their horse equipment should be a bridle, a pair of leggins, a saddle, with only knapsacks and cushion. The utensils for every ten men should consist of a light copper kettle, two wooden plates, and a tent made of twelve ells of Brabant, prepared by merely sewing it into three curtains.

Their dress, a riding coat of heavy blue cloth with capes of the same, breeches reaching to the heels, stockings, deerskin moccasins, a cotton jacket, small hat, and a blanket. With this accoutrement and dress, which should be compulsory, because their greatest delight is to go naked except for a breech-cloth, a signal victory was gained over General Bradók, he himself being killed, leaving in the power of the *canaille* (thus he called it), the artillery which was made use of in the capture of the castle of Chartres, from which event the loss of Lusiana followed.

Since beasts of burden are so scarce and so high-priced in the Post of Natchitoches, a sufficient number must be sent thither, so that when the troops arrive from

New Orleans they may use them to transport themselves to their destination.

It appears that three pack horses and one mule will be sufficient for each of these militiamen.

Their daily rations will be two pounds of maize, and the same amount of meat, so that the *fanega* weighing six and one-half *arrobas*, and a beef twelve, it will be easy to calculate the consumption of both articles, by considering the number of men, Spaniards as well as Indians, their sojourn in the village of the Taovaianes, their march, and their return.

The goods to be given to the Indians, at their regular prices in New Orleans, whence they will be transported by water to Nachitoches, and from there to the village of the Taovaiazes (mules and drivers having been provided), are as follows:

2000 lbs. of powder	$ 800
5000 lbs. of shot	400
250 fusils	1000
300 lances	120
Twelve gross of knives	120
100 lbs. of vermillion	160
150 shirts	150
16 coat[s] and hats	150
20 pieces of cloth	500
Steels, flints, awls, worm-screws, mirrors, etc.	100
Total	$3,500

Since the excesses to which the heathen go in their wars are notorious, those of these allies with respect to the captives who may fall into their power ought to be guarded against in a Christian manner. Due compassion should be shown for the women and children, who would be destined by their cruel masters to those dances and feasts so repugnant to humanity, if ours did not interest itself in suppressing this barbarous evil. For this reason it will be well to fix amicably a moderate price for each individual, on account of and at the expense of the missions *de Propaganda Fide* of this presidio. This sale will compensate the missions for the injurious losses which they have suffered from epidemics, war, and the incessant flights of the apostates, while it is a ransom certainly worthy of the favor of the All-Powerful, of the magnanimity of the Spaniards, and even of the esteem of the barbarous cannibals with whom it may be arranged. In all of this, the Señor Commandant-general will determine whatever may suit his pleasure.

Royal Presidio of San Antonio de Bejar, February 20, 1778. ANASTACIO DE MESIERES [*sic*].

VIII. THE EXPEDITION OF 1778 FROM BEXAR TO THE NATIONS OF THE UPPER TRINITY, BRAZOS, AND RED RIVERS

168. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, MARCH 18, 1778[203]

[LETTER NO. 1] SEÑOR COMMANDANT-GENERAL,

My dear Sir: With a lieutenant and twenty-two soldiers of the garrison of Bejar, six militiamen from Natchitoches, and my two sons, I set out for Bucareli, where I arrived without incident on the ninth of the present month.

Immediately, after waiting only to secure provisions and horses, I despatched to my official chief the packet of letters dated the sixth of January last which you did me the honor to intrust to me.

Abandoning the royal highway at the Fort of Santa Cruz[204] and returning to it below the customary crossing of the Guadalupe, I directed my course through the rough and trackless regions where the Comanches had their corrals and dwellings, without finding the least trace of these Indians, who for more than a year have ceased the depredations and rapine to which they were so addicted in these parts.

After leaving the Guadalupe River I crossed the Colorado and Brasos, where there are great quantities of all kinds of fish and birds, valuable timber and quarries, an incredible number of Castilian cattle, and herds of mustangs that never leave the banks of these streams.

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[203] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 21. Also *ibid.*, f. 112; Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(2), f. 1; *ibid.*, f. 100; Bancroft Coll., Louisiana; *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 269. *Documents* 168-183 are from certified copies.

[204] This was the garrison on Arroyo del Cibolo.

The region, from one river to the other, is no less bountifully supplied with buffalo, bear, deer, antelopes, wild boars, hares, partridges, and turkeys, which live in luxuriant and spacious plains, that are endowed with a healthful climate, neither hot nor cold, with richest pastures, various medicinal herbs, and permanent arroyos, along the banks of which are paths shaded by lofty trees. There are also, in their season, fruits that are not to be despised, such as grapes, medlars, nuts, and acorns. And thus so many conveniences offer themselves for the use of the traveler, and for appropriation by those who choose to make this their home.

The new pueblo of Nuestra Señora del Pilar de Bucareli is situated in a broad prairie, watered by the large volumed Trinity River;[208] and, although up to the present it has not obtained the irrigating facilities which its commandant tells me it certainly has within six leagues, even though it lacks this advantage it seems to be of greatest importance to encourage the settlement for the following reasons:

1st. Because, since it is an equal distance from Bejar, Natchitoches, and the Nations of the North, it can receive promptly and forward messages to any of these places.

2d. Because, having as neighbors on the north the villages of the Tancagues, Tuacanes, and Yscanis, and on the south those of the Orcoquisas and Atacapas, it has facilities for binding firmly our union with them all, since it may avail itself of the former tribes for information as to what occurs in the north, and of the latter for news of what happens along the coast and on the adjacent islands.

3d. Because, being near the small bands of the

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[208] Rio Trinidad.

Vidais, S^n Pedro,[206] Tejas,[207] and Nacogdoches, it may expect, from their long and unchanging friendship, aid in any emergencies that may occur.

4th. Because, since it has been proved by experience that the Trinity River is navigable to the sea, and that by means of it boats may go as far as the port of the Opelusas, where empties a river leading to New Orleans, it will be possible quickly and at little cost to transport to this city the flour – which will be produced there in greatest abundance, as is promised by the three good crops of this kind that have been raised there in succession – tallow, lard, hides, and beef. This will serve not only to enrich our Bucareli, but also to put an end to the dangerous opportunity which Luisiana of necessity offers to foreigners.[208]

The Vidais nation consists of one hundred warriors, having lost about an equal number in the last epidemic, of which the reverend father preacher, Fray Franzisco José de la Garza, zealously took advantage, in order that the souls [of the victims], most of whom died baptized, might be saved. The Vidais are a vagrant, miserable, lazy people, who, having forsaken the chase as a means of subsistence, beg constantly for their living in this new pueblo, and thus contribute not to the relief but to the hindrance of its own poverty-stricken and needy inhabitants.

I have just been informed by a trustworthy trader who comes from the coast that a band of ninety Carancaguaces Indians are at present visiting the Orcoquisas, whom they have told that a great number of families of their nation had gone down to occupy an island situated between the mouths of the Colorado and the Brazos, adding that there are to be found there anchors, bells, earthen pots, artillery, and other debris from vessels which the sea has cast up. This same trader tells me that many of these Carancaguaces speak our language, from which I infer that they are apostates, and that unless opposition is made to their settlement, others will join them, to the detriment of our missions. In view of this[209] I have strictly forbidden granting them the trade which they desire, because that would give them encouragement, when most decidedly they should be treated as an odious organization.

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[206] San Pedro de los Nabedachos. See volume 1, *footnote* 215.

[207] The principal one of the ancient Hasinai villages, properly the Hainai, on the Angelina River.

[208] Compare with the appeal made by De Mézières on October 7, 1779.

On the mainland, opposite this island, there are located twenty-four families of Cocos and Mayeyes, likewise fugitives from the missions of la Bahya del Espiritu Santo and San Antonio de Bexar.

May our Lord guard and prosper the important life of your Lordship as many years as possible. Bucareli, March 18, 1778.

Señor Commandant-general, your most humble servant kisses the hand of your Lordship.

ATANACIO DE MEZIERES.

169. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, MARCH 23, 1778[210]

[LETTER NO. 2] SEÑOR COMMANDANT-GENERAL,

My dear Sir: On the eighteenth day of the month that is just ending I continued my journey with the same troop that I led from Bexar, minus one soldier who remained behind seriously ill, to which were added thirteen militiamen from Bucareli, with their captain[211] and the Reverend Father Fray Francisco José de la Garza. Going north I found after eighteen leagues' march a ranchería of Quitseis Indians numbering twenty warriors, who, having separated from the main body of their nation, have settled here, attracted by a broad and fertile valley, in which they maintain with profit their cornfields and droves of horses. They have near by the additional advantage of many salines[212] on which they draw not only for their own use but also to sell. They also constantly kill many deer, using the flesh for food and selling the skins. The road that leads to this delightful place is over steep and rocky hills, deep glens, creeks, lakes and bogs, which, taken with the excessive rains, caused us such difficulty that only the zeal and valor of our Spaniards could overcome it. But just as divine providence exerts itself to relieve human beings even in the places that seem the most destitute, so all that country affords an extraordinary number of vines, which, though wild, yield in their season a fruit little inferior, as experts think, to that of Castile. There are also the viper's grass,[213] an antidotal plant, saxifrage, and sweet potatoes,[214] which it would be ingratitude to forget, because they have efficiently relieved the needs of the nascent pueblo of Bucareli.

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[209] *En cuya atención* is repeated in the copy.

[210] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 23. Also in Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(a), f. 3; *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 271.

[211] Antonio Gil Ybarbo, founder of Bucareli, and, later of Nacogdoches. See Bolton, *Abandonment and Reoccupation of East Texas*, *passim*.

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[212] The paraphrase in the *Memorias* reads "*muchas salinas donde sacan para su gusto, para vender, y salar muchos venados, que matan con cuya carne se mantienen, y dedican las pieles al comercio.*" The idea conveyed to the copyist is not the same as that given by the translation. In this general vicinity is the Grand Saline of Van Zandt Country, Texas, where a large salt manufactory has been established. [Simonds, *Geography of Texas*, 305, 198.]

[213] *Echium vulgare*, of the genus *Boragineae*. Common name, viper's herb, viper's grass, snake flower, blue throttle. I am indebted for this botanical information to Mr. Wolf, of the School of Botany, the University of Texas.

[214] *Camotes*. The *Memorias* reads *camotitos*, which is probably correct. *Camotitos* means young shoots, young asphodel. The *camote* is the *Convulvulus batatas*.

May God guard your Lordship many years. Ranchería of the Quitseys, March 23, 1778.

I kiss the hand of your Lordship, etc.

ATANACIO DE MECIERES.

170. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, MARCH 28, 1778[215]

[LETTER NO. 3] SEÑOR COMMANDANT-GENERAL,

My dear Sir: Going west from the ranchería of the Quitseys fifteen leagues, in which distance not an inch of ground was seen that was not suitable for cultivation, the country consisting of woods and plains separated from one another by frequent brooks, I arrived at the place which the natives call La Tortuga [The Tortoise]. It is an eminence which commands a broad valley, and gives rise to a large spring of crystalline water.[215a] The Tancagues live in its neighborhood, not in permanent houses and in a village, but underneath [tents of] skins, and in various bands, which are directed, maintained, and moved by the caprice of their petty chiefs and leaders. They number about three hundred warriors, including not a few apostates. They are all given to stealing, are daring, and are the ones who have taken the greater part in the hostilities which the presidios of San Sabas, Espíritu Santo, and Bexar have suffered. They would even continue these hostilities did not the example, influence, and threats of the Tuacanas and Yscanis restrain them. I regret not to have found their chiefs, who were scattered, as I have just related; and, therefore, I am charging the traders to take pains to congregate them on my return, in order that I may earnestly recommend to them the restitution and delivery of the

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[215] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 23. Also in Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(a), f. 3; *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 272.

[215a] Perhaps the eminence was that on which the present village of Tehuacana, Limestone County, is located.

Christians,[216] and the maintenance of harmony, and that I may encourage them to form a village, build houses, live together, and devote themselves to the cultivation of the soil, threatening that if they continue the evil customs arising from their vagabond, indolent life, similar to that of brutes, our important commerce will be taken away from them at once and forever, with which deprivation they will remain in danger of being forgotten by us, and exposed to incessant hunger and to persecution from their enemies.

May God preserve your Lordship many years. Parage de la Tortuga, March 28, 1778.

I kiss the hand of your Lordship.

ATANACIO DE MEZIERES.

171. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, APRIL 5, 1778[217]

[LETTER NO. 4] SEÑOR COMMANDANT-GENERAL,

My dear Sir: Marching sixteen leagues in the same direction, west, from El Parage de la Tortuga [the Place of the Tortoise], where a soldier from Bexar and two militiamen from my jurisdiction remained sick, noting the same character of soil, timber, and water, I arrived at the bank of the River Brazos de Dios, which I found swollen. But with the prompt assistance of the Tuacanas, who have settled on the opposite bank,[218] I crossed over at once to them, and was received by their chief with the greatest demonstrations of sincere love. The next day the principal men having assembled in his house, I told them of the happy arrival of your Lordship in these lands, of your superior authority over them, of your genial benevolence and pity for the natives that inhabit them, and of the powerful protection with which you will aid those who are friendly, in which class they are especially to be placed, because of their well-known loyalty. At this they were very much pleased and gratified. After having spoken to the Xaraname Indians, apostates who dwell there—without their saying a word in reply concerning the counsel which at length and in agreement with the Reverend Father Fray Franzisco Jose de la Garza I gave them relative to their spiritual and temporal welfare—I availed myself of the Tuacanes, in order that now by kindness, now by means of threats, they might compel them to return to their jurisdiction, as your Lordship has decreed. In this the Tuacanas showed themselves so zealous and enthusiastic that not one refused, and all gave me their word to do it just as soon as a party of them which had gone out to hunt should return. In view of this and at the request of these apostates, I wrote to the chevalier governor, asking him to please send at once from the mission of Espiritu Santo, of which they are children, the provisions, pack horses, and people necessary in order to meet them at the Colorado River, which they have designated, and from there to conduct them to their own territory, from which they have been fugitives, forgetting their Christian obligations, for a period of sixteen years. Their number, including old and young, is more than one hundred souls.

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[216] The apostate Xaraname are meant here.

[217] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 24. Also in Estados Unidos, 777, leg. 3884(a), f. 4; *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 273.

[218] The language of this passage would indicate that De Mézières regarded the settlement as relatively recent. See volume 1, pages 22-23, 46, and *footnote* 417.

I cannot refrain from telling your Lordship how much we have been helped on this important occasion by the fervent, sincere, and apostolic spirit of the very Reverend Father Fr. Franzisco Josef de la Garza, and by the aged Lieutenant D^n Anttonio Termino,[219] the present lieutenant of cavalry, D^n Jose Menchaca, and the captain of militia, D^n Antonio Gil y Barbo, all of whom, remembering their obligation to constantly watch over the troops in their charge, have aided me so much that I acknowledge the extraordinary pleasure and benefit which I have derived from their company, and I hope, from the benignity of your Lordship, that your Highness may keep them in mind, as persons capable of discharging any command that may have for its object the service of both majesties.[220]

This village contains about one hundred fifty warriors. It is located in a fertile plain protected from the overflows of the river that bathes it by a high, thick wall, at whose base rises a spring from which the inhabitants drink, and from which they could draw the water necessary to irrigate the broad plains where they have planted their crops, but they are ignorant of this advantage. They are industrious, and are very fond of us, as experience proves, now in the restoration of the abovementioned apostates, and again in the supply of provisions with which they have relieved Bucareli, without even reserving enough for their own use until the harvest. For these services I have given due thanks in the name of your Lordship. They complain bitterly of the continued thieving of the Comanches, who have settled in large numbers on the same river, the Brazos, so that there is nothing for them to do but to withdraw themselves or, in conjunction with the neighboring nations, take serious action against so deadly a pest.

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[219] This name is variously spelled Treviño, Termiño, Tremiño. Treviño is the better form. He was for several years a prisoner at the Taovayas village, but was released. See Volume 1, page 50.

[220] Later De Mézières asked for a specific appointment for Treviño and it was made.

Your Lordship already knows that they are bitter enemies of the Apaches, in search of whom they are now planning to go as far as the places where the former raise their crops, which they [the Tuacanas] know.

I have made known to the chief of the Tuacanas the pleasure which your Lordship would feel if their neighbors, the Tancagues, would found a village and, devoting themselves to the cultivation of the soil, give up their vagabond and miserable mode of life; and that unless they do so, trade will undoubtedly be taken away from them. This proposal appeared to him very just, and, a chief of the Tancagues nation having appeared most opportunely, he spoke to him earnestly, urging him with such commands and entreaties to go at once to persuade the rest of his nation to do what was justly demanded of them that I have no doubt they will carry out our desires in this matter. Upon me rests the duty of watching carefully until this result is entirely secured.

May God preserve your Lordship many years. First village of the Tuacanes, April 5, 1778.

I kiss the hand of your Lordship, etc.

ATANASIO DE MEZIERES.

172. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, APRIL 7, 1778[221]

[LETTER NO. 5] SEÑOR COMMANDANT-GENERAL,

My dear Sir: Continuing in the same westward direction, at a distance of eight leagues above the former village I found another settlement of the Tuacanas on the bank of the same Brazos River, which is navigable part of the year and which here especially is very attractive, one of its banks consisting of a pleasant meadow and the other of beautiful hills. Their lands are even better and more richly endowed with everything that an industrious republic of rational beings could ask, such as timber, limestone, millstones, building-stone, and paving-stone, all of which I have seen, and brooks so numerous that within a short distance I found eleven very abundant ones, which without much difficulty can be incorporated into one, and from whose union the most desirable advantages may be obtained. The character of the people, who exceed the former in number, is the same, and therefore I have nothing to add to what I have said of these others and of their gratitude.

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[221] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 26. Also in Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(a), f. 6; *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 274.

Mine is in proportion to the great affection which they show me, especially by the aid which they give me, their chiefs having pledged themselves to accompany me until I shall finish my labors. They, too, complain much of the Comanches, three bands of whom they tell me have gone into the interior for some unknown purpose. Of this I am informing the chevalier governor, that he may act accordingly. Finally, their hatred for the Lipanes is so great that they never fail to manifest it in their conversation, and the fact that I have shown myself interested in this, I have observed, is not the least cause of the affection and esteem which they have bestowed upon me.

May God preserve your Lordship many years. Puesto Mayor [Chief Post] of the Tuacanes. April 7, 1778.

I kiss the hand of your Lordship, etc.

ATANASIO DE MEZIERES.

173. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, APRIL 8, 1778[222]

[LETTER NO. 6] SEÑOR COMMANDANT-GENERAL,

My dear Sir: An object of the greatest importance being the conversion of the Xaraname Indians, their extraction from among heathen, and their restitution to the mission to which they belong, all of which, thanks be to God, has been accomplished, as I have the honor of informing your Lordship in my adjoined official communication, number 4, it has seemed to me indispensable, in order not to lose or even defer so important a result, to inform the chevalier governor of your resolution without the least delay. This I am doing with the concurrence of the Xaranames, asking the help that they need for their journey. And since, in case the people should be few, either the advice might be delayed or might run the risk of being delayed by the Comanches,[223] who at present are found in large numbers in these parts, I have intrusted the matter[224] to the lieutenant of cavalry, Dn José Menchaca, whose zeal, prudence, knowledge of the country, and proved valor leave no doubt that he will effectively and promptly execute the charge which I give him.

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[222] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 26. Also in Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(a), f. 7; *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 275.

Likewise the minister, Reverend Father Fray Franzisco José de la Garza, is returning to Bucareli, the Xaranames desiring and having chosen him for their father with such eagerness that I found it impossible to deny them this consolation. It seems well that he should keep on the lookout and prepared to go to his new destination, in view of which I have thought it proper that the captain of militia, Don Antonio Gil Ybarbo, should accompany his reverence with a part of his militiamen, whom I consider useless for the difficult and long journey still before me, as they are sick, defenseless, without supplies, without packhorses, and without clothing, though thoroughly inspired by the blind obedience which has brought them. They and their industrious commander, to whom I am giving various commissions to fulfill on the way, may apply themselves to their planting and to the important duty of relieving their poor families.

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[223] This seems to be the most probable of several possible meanings that may be found in this ambiguous passage.

[224] I.e. the important matter of carrying the despatches to Béxar, not that of conducting the Xaraname to La Bahía. See next *Document*.

Accompanied by the militia left me, and five soldiers whom I have retained, together with the aged Lieutenant Don Antonio Termino, I shall continue my journey until I reach the Taovaiazes and Mahas. My object is to assure the former of our firm and enviable friendship, a tribute so justly due for that which they manifest for us, and, with respect to the latter, not only to secure their friendship, of which I am not doubtful, but also to advise them to settle in the place that I shall assign them, as they have requested me to do, which will be either on this same Brazos River or that of San Xavier, subject always to your Lordship's consent. There they can, upon occasion, oppose the Comanches, with whom they are already displeased, and in view of their strength, can, with the aid of other nations equally interested in the chastisement of such noted thieves, either hold them in check or drive them out of these regions. Of everything that I accomplish, do, and observe, I shall have the honor of informing your Lordship, in conformity with my duty and with the instructions which the Señor Baron de Ripperda has given me, to which instructions, so wise a product of his experience, I shall bind myself, certain of the approbation of your Lordship, which is the most coveted laurel to which we who have the honor of being subject to your Highness should aspire.

May God preserve your Lordship many years. Tuacanas, April 8, 1778.

I kiss the hand of your Lordship, etc.

ATANASIO DE MEZIERES.

174. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, APRIL 18, 1778[225]

[LETTER NO. 1] SEÑOR COMMANDANT-GENERAL,

My dear Sir: In my former official communications I had the honor to inform your Lordship of my observations and of the results of my march from Bexar to the villages of the Tuacanas. Now I comply with my duty by informing your Excellency of the remainder of my journey and of my return.

Having despatched to Bejar Lieutenant Don José Menchaca with my above-mentioned official reports, and the captain of militia, Don Antonio Gil Ybarbo, to carry out the orders that I intrusted to him, I continued my march north and arrived on the seventh day at the village of the Taovayazes.[226]

My company consists of six soldiers from Bexar, four militiamen from Bucareli, an equal number from Natchitoches, a chief of the Tuacanas with nine Indians of his nation, and a leading man of the Comanches, whom I found on my way. He had been a prisoner at Bejar, but, after recovering from his wounds, came to be looked upon more as a son than as a captive. He obtained his liberty from the chevalier governor, for which he was so grateful that as soon as he saw me he offered to be my guide, interpreter, and mediator, in case we encountered his people, and my companion in any capacity whatever as regards other enemies.

The attractiveness of the lands which I have traversed for the distance of eighty leagues is inexpressible, with respect to the numerous springs and creeks which encourage the irrigation of the adjacent plains, the woods that beautify their banks, the rocks which, making their bottoms firm, facilitate the construction of the dams that may be undertaken, and, finally, the abundance of buffalo that feed in their neighborhood. Their number is so great that, already having a superabundance of this savory food, it was not a necessity but a vice wantonly to destroy so estimable a gift of divine providence, which, manifesting itself also by numerous herds of deer, antelopes, turkeys, partridges, geese, cranes, rabbits, and hares, gave no place for noticing fatigue, but furnished recreation and diversion. Nor was any thought given to the mere satisfaction of hunger, but only to seeking for luxuries.

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[225] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 28. Also in Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(a), f. 8; *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 275.

[226] It will be noted that he did not proceed to the Wichita tribe this time.

It is worthy of note that from the Brazos River, on which the Tuacanas are established, until one reaches the river which bathes the village of the Taouayazes, one sees on the right a forest that the natives appropriately call the Grand Forest.[227] It is very dense, but not very wide. It seems to be there as a guide even to the most inexperienced, and to give refuge in this dangerous region to those who, few in number and lacking in courage, wish to go from one village to another.

May God preserve your Lordship many years. Taovayazes, April 18, 1778.

I kiss the hand of your Lordship, etc.

ATANACIO DE MEZIERES.

175. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, APRIL 18, 1778[228]

[LETTER NO. 2] SEÑOR COMMANDANT-GENERAL,

My dear Sir: The nation of the Taovayazes is divided into two villages, one situated on the northern bank of the Vermejo, or Natchitoches, River, the other opposite the first on the other bank. The former is composed of thirty-seven houses, the latter of one hundred twenty-three. Each dwelling contains from ten to twelve beds, considering which fact a conservative estimate places the number of men, including youths, at more than eight hundred, while that of the women and the children of both sexes is very large, Their dress, consisting only of shirts, leggins, and moccasins, is of skins; their leather shields, horse equipment, and camping tents are of the same material. Their foresight in supplying provisions shows them to be industrious, for there is no house in which at present there may not be seen four or five vessels full of maize, each one estimated at four and a half *fanegas*, besides a great quantity of beans and calabashes. They preserve the latter from year to year, weaving them curiously like mats. In addition, they raise watermelons and tobacco in great plenty. The abundance of the springs furnishes them fresh and crystalline water to drink, moistens and fertilizes the broad plains where they plant their crops, and offers itself to any one who may wish to irrigate them. That of the river, which is healthful, is a perpetual snare for the cattle that are always in sight, and which they kill at all times. The fish are of the best varieties, but they do not care for them. They have fire-wood right at hand, securing it from that Grand Forest of which I have spoken. This is eighty leagues long, and from one to two wide, and even more in parts, and in it bear and wild boars are found. Nor is there any scarcity of useful timber, such as poplar, ash, elm, and black and white walnut, the former valuable for lumber, the latter to supply oil. The quarries seem to challenge use, but they serve the Indians only for whetstones to sharpen their hatchets, grinding stones to make *metates*,[229] white stones for lances, and flint stones to tip their arrows and to make fire. The temperature is neither too hot nor too cold. Finally, in order that they may lack nothing that is necessary, they are provided with a bank of excellent salt in the middle of the river, which is formed there in such a way that, when a part has been removed, the loss is restored in a short while, just as if it were made anew – a most wonderful product, a sample of which I have the honor to send to your Lordship, as it seems to me worthy of your attention.

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[227] This forest was clearly the eastern Cross Timbers, which gives us a clue to the route and the location of the Taovayas tribe.

[228] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 29. Also in Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(a), f. 9; *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 276.

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[229] A *metate* is a stone used for grinding maize.

But even these overwhelming advantages are offset in no small degree by the perpetual dread in which these natives live, now of the Osage, who wage bloody war against them; now of the Apache, who never cease to disturb them; and finally, of the Comanche, who in the guise of friends, make them repeated visits, always with the purpose of stealing. These last insults they pretend not to notice, lest they should make other enemies, when they already have too many.

Their government is democratic, not even excluding the women, in consideration of what they contribute to the welfare of the republic. The women tan, sew, and paint the skins, fence in the fields, care for the cornfields, harvest the crops, cut and fetch the fire-wood, prepare the food, build the houses, and rear the children, their constant care stopping at nothing that contributes to the comfort and pleasure of their husbands. The latter devote themselves wholly to the chase and to warfare. By the first they become rich, by the second famous. They come to be petty chiefs among their people, not by the prowess of their fathers, but by their own. To this is added the thought that in proportion to their achievements they will gain for themselves happiness in the next life. They have no religion, or very little, the most noticeable feature of it being the veneration of fire, together with ridiculous superstitions. They are cheerful, affable, and docile in their manner, compassionate toward the sick, orphans, and widows, respectful to their elders, generous toward strangers, kind to guests, but in general more revengeful for injury than grateful for benefits, as is proved by the atrocities which their prisoners experience at their hands, which are so great that even to relate them would cause horror and make the narrator a party to them.

The Bermejo River rises in the mountains of New Mexico four days' journey above the Taovayazes, forming there three branches, which unite near their village. The more northern branch has that salt deposit which I have just mentioned. The volume of its water, however, is small, except in time of floods, which last only a short while, because its descent is very rapid. A short distance below, other rivers contribute their waters to it, making it navigable. Since it joins the San Luis, or Micissipí, sixty leagues above the city of New Orleans, and five hundred below its source, taking into consideration its sinuosity, we owe to it easy access to and communication with the settlement of Natchitoches and the neighboring Indian nations. Its course is east northeast. It forms the boundary between the Interior Provinces of Nueva España and Luisiana.

May God preserve your Lordship many years. Taovayazes, April 18, 1778.

I kiss the hand of your Lordship, etc.

ATANASIO DE MEZIERES.

176. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, APRIL 19, 1778[230]

[LETTER NO. 3] SEÑOR COMMANDANT-GENERAL,

My dear Sir: Having sent in advance to the Taovayazes notice of my approach to their village, the chief men came out to receive me, took me from my horse, and carried me upon their shoulders, doing the same with Don Antonio Termino, whom they tenderly love, on account of having taken him prisoner, keeping him as a son, and afterwards sending him to his native jurisdiction. They manifested to me the greatest pleasure at seeing and associating with the Spaniards from Bejar for the first time,[281] proclaiming their arrival, and inviting the women and children to get acquainted with them. At this call the crowd assembled, as is customary when the more unusual things are to be marveled at. During the days that I remained with them they brought us plenty to eat from all the houses. When the day came that I had set for a general gathering, for the purpose of giving them the presents that the chevalier governor of Texas had sent them in the name of your Lordship, I assured them of the powerful aid and protection of the great chiefs of the Interior Provinces of Nueva España and Luisiana. At this they were so pleased that they immediately commanded that a very large dwelling should be erected, in order that in the future those of our people who might live there could lodge in it as their own, without experiencing the inconvenience of the other houses. Nor did their affection confine itself to these demonstrations, for they urged me to entreat your Lordship that the Spaniards might settle among them, assuring me that they should not lack the help and favor which a new settlement needs. I gave them my word that I would not fail to transmit to your Lordship a report of their loyalty. In the meantime I gave to their villages the names of San Theodoro and San Bernardo,[232] which I beg my chiefs to approve, as a token of my immortal gratitude for the work in which they have deigned to employ my useless self, and for ordering this happy entrance into a land which has been the theatre of the most unheard-of barbarities, but which to-day is the scene of the most desirable peace.

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[230] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 30. Also in Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(a), f. 11; *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 278.

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[281] This assertion is probably true in the main. Whatever connection there had been hitherto with the Spaniards had been mainly by way of New Mexico or eastern Texas.

It is certain that if this place comes to be settled it will be one of the most important, both at present and in the future, because it is the master-key of the north, where the friendly nations will be dealt with through their mediation, the unfriendly, such as the Comanches and the Osages, will be won over, or, with the help of the friendly nations, conquered; where full information concerning the remote nations will be secured; where any new enterprise or invasion of the neighboring English will be prevented; and finally, where prompt and easy communication will be had with Natchitoches, Ilinoeses, New Mexico, and Bejar, since it is centrally located with reference to all of them, with no inconvenience as to rivers when going straight east to the first place, and with the advantage that such rivers as must be crossed to reach the other places, situated north, west, and south, respectively, offer no obstacles, because it is not far from their sources.[233] The advantage that our people would gain [by occupying this place] is evident from the faithful account which I gave of the soil, temperature, water, etc.; and although I do not claim for myself works of supererogation,[234] I will not conceal from the piety of the Señor Commandant-general the harvest of souls which a minister would reap there, among people good, simple, and without any especial religion to prevent them from accepting that of the true God, particularly if he were accompanied by some Tlascaltecan families,[235] whose example as regards customs, government, religion, and industry would undoubtedly give rise to one of the most opulent and advantageous settlements of these realms.

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[232] See Bancroft, *North Mexican States*, vol. i, 631.

[233] It is not clear what is "not far." It may be the Taovayas, or the crossing of these rivers, but probably the former.

[234] He means that he does not expect credit for going beyond his instructions.

May God preserve your Lordship many years. Taovayazes, April 19, 1778.

I kiss the hand of your Lordship, etc.

ATANACIO DE MEZIERES.

177. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, APRIL 19, 1778[236]

[LETTER NO. 4] SEÑOR COMMANDANT-GENERAL,

My dear Sir: Two Englishmen entered the neighborhood of the Taovayazes by way of the Arcansas River (which flows into the San Luis, or Micissipí and runs close to and parallel with the Natchitoches) and begged admittance to their villages, in order to establish trade and friendship with them.[237] They did not consent to this, but, in accordance with the advice which I had given them on my former visit, they took from them by force the goods that they carried, leaving to them only the privilege of retreating. I greatly praised the first decision, but condemned the second, warning them anew that those people are bad men, vagabonds, and enemies of theirs, as is evident to me by the aid that they give to the Osages; that on this account they ought not only to have been despoiled, but arrested as well; that in the future they should report to me concerning those who might present themselves; and that in case of resistance they should use force of arms against them. This they have promised me to do, in view of which and of the known boldness, obstinacy, and restlessness of such pernicious foreigners, of which there was a sad example in Canada from its foundation to its ultimate dissolution and ruin, I beg your Lordship to pardon any serious measure that these faithful natives may take through my suggestion, which arises not from any special hatred, but from love of the fatherland. This first entrance of the English was at the beginning of last winter.[228]

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[235] See note on the Tlascaltecans in the colonization of New Spain, volume I, *footnote* 143.

[236] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 32. Also in Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(2), f. 13; *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 279.

[237] This is the earliest actual instance that I have found thus far of Englishmen among this tribe.

May God preserve your Lordship many years. Taovayazes, April 19, 1778.

I kiss the hand of your Lordship, etc.

ATANASIO DE MESSIERES.

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178. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, APRIL 19, 1778[229]

[LETTER NO. 5] SEÑOR COMMANDANT-GENERAL,

My dear Sir: Having learned that there were in these villages two brass cannons from the company of Colonel Don Diego Ortiz Parrilla, I asked the chiefs for them, and they gladly delivered them to me. My intention is to take them to Bucareli, and from there to send them to the chevalier governor of Bejar, from whose presidio they came, believing that their conveyance thither will be gratifying to your Lordship, both because such a trophy is taken from the savages, and because their voluntary and gratuitous surrender gives evidence of the simplicity and the fine friendship which mark the dealings of these natives.

May God preserve your Lordship many years. Villages of San Teodoro and San Bernardo, April 19, 1778.

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[228] See Volume I, pages 66-69 for comments on early fears of the English.

[229] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 32. Also in Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(a), f. 13; *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 280.

I kiss the hand of your Lordship, etc.

ATANASIO DE MEZIERES.

179. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, APRIL 19, 1778[240]

[LETTER NO. 6] SEÑOR COMMANDANT-GENERAL,

My dear Sir: There live among the Taovayazes ten Spaniards, natives of New Mexico, of both sexes and of various ages and castes, whom the former have bought from the Comanches. Their present captivity is more tolerable than the first, because they now live among friends who treat them well, as is evident to me and as they themselves admit. They do not lose hope of securing their liberty, in view of the alliance that we have with their masters. I have grieved much at their unfortunate condition, but have thought best not to negotiate for their ransom until I should consult with your Lordship, because if, on the one hand, it seems unfeeling not to exert ourselves in this matter, which would not be very expensive, on the other hand, to do so might arouse the greed of the enemy to make new captures and of the friend to obtain the odious profit by interesting himself in them.

May God preserve your Lordship many years. Villages of San Teodoro and San Bernardo, April 19, 1778.

I kiss the hand of your Lordship, etc.

ATANASIO DE MEZIERES.

180. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, APRIL 19, 1778[241]

[LETTER NO. 7] SEÑOR COMMANDANT-GENERAL,

My dear Sir: Since one of the chief charges given me by the chevalier governor of Bejar was to see the tribe of the Avajes, or Majas, who last year came down from the banks of the distant Missuris River, where they had their village, to unite with these, I regret to have found only one chief, a nephew of the head chief of the tribe, with ten Indians, owing to the fact that the others have gone inland toward the northwest to found a new village seventy leagues from the Taovayazes. I have summoned this chief, petted him, and won his confidence and friendship. I have complained to him mildly of the ease with which his compatriots were stirred up, abandoning a place where they might live quietly and happily under the shadow of the powerful protection of your Lordship. He has confessed the error and promised to correct it quickly by bringing back his people and establishing them in a beautiful spot which I have designated to him, where he will live not as a guest but as proprietor, enjoying our intercourse, and opposing the Osages, his enemies, without sharing with others the laurels that he will win by his arms alone, and with the advantage that he will derive continually from our commerce, to which will be added that of the neighboring villages. The Taovayazes have greatly praised this decision, giving their word to the chief to regard him and aid him as a brother. In token of their good faith they gave him two horses, in order that he might hasten his journey, which he prepared for at once.

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[240] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 33. Also in Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(a), f. 13; *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 280.

[241] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 33. Also in Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(a), f. 14; *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 280.

The place where the Avajes ought to settle is two and a half days' journey from the Taovayazes, and an equal distance from Cadodachos. It is situated on the south bank of the same river, the Vermejo, which bathes both of these villages and the post of Natchitoches, whence, since the river is navigable to that place, the goods which they may need will be carried by water, thus avoiding the exorbitant cost, labor, and damages which are incurred in transportation by land. Besides this advantage, by extending and *reënforcing the cordon of* friendly Indians opposed to the Osages, the hunters of Luisiana, aided by the new settlers, will profit by the conveniences of this opulent river, which they now lack because of the well-founded fear of the hostilities of the above-mentioned enemies.

The Avajes or Mahas are docile, modest, devoted to the cultivation of the soil, to the chase, and to war, and are indefatigable, as is shown by the laborious marches on foot to which they are reared. Their chief has taught me much concerning the numerous tribes that live in the neighborhood of the Missuris River, and concerning another nation, whose inhabitants can be seen at certain times above their old habitation at a distance of two moons of rough travel toward the west-northwest, where they live on the shore of a large lake of fresh water, on which one goes in row and sailboats to visit them. Their clothing consists of long dresses; their weapons of firearms and the sabre. Their color is somewhat brownish – in fact if his story is trustworthy, they resemble the Asiatics, an old report so frequently told that there is no longer any doubt of its truth; nor is there any doubt of our tardiness in undertaking the discovery of such curious regions.[242]

May God preserve your Lordship many years. Villages of San Teodoro and San Bernardo, April 19, 1778.

I kiss the hand of your Lordship, etc.

ATANASIO DE MESSIERES.

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[242] Compare with *Document* 188.

181. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, APRIL 19, 1778[243]

[LETTER NO. 8] SEÑOR COMMANDANT-GENERAL,

My dear Sir: I have found in this village eight of the Comanches who live above the Tuacanas on the bank of the Brazos River. They told me that a band of their people had recently made an attack upon us on the road which goes from Bejar to Rio Grande[244] and had returned without injury, bringing many pack-horses and a scalp, which, according to what they say, is that of the lieutenant-paymaster of the said presidio, who, at this time, should be on his way to San Luis. They add that they have quit their ravages at Bejar and the adjacent missions, because it is of no use to lay hands upon them nor to run the risk of a siege, on account of the constant and vigilant guard that watches them. Therefore they are turning toward Laredo and the ranches of that vicinity, which are always as well supplied as they are defenseless. Finally, considering their narrative, it seems to me probable that these same Comanches are responsible for the death of a young man called Nepomuceno Trujillo, a citizen of the villa of Bejar, although the deed has been attributed to the Apaches. This news has put me out of the notion of going to visit the former people. And why should I go? To offer my hand to hands that I might see stained in our blood? To be a witness of the spoliation of my nation? To fondle and protect barbarians whose crude understanding would ascribe our conduct to fear? And if with threats, to expose the few vassals of the king who accompany me to any boldness of such a haughty and irrational people?

Having consulted about the matter with the principal men of these villages, they have approved my plan to avail myself of the Comanche prisoner who has been in Bejar, sending him as a person devoted to us and also of acknowledged authority among his own people, to inform them that their robberies and hostilities have now reached the limit, and that I came in the name of the great captains of these Interior Provinces and Luisiana to offer their protection, believing that if they should desist from their perverse customs they could share in such a boon; but that I saw only the contrary; that I would not hide this from his Highness; that he would only await their final promise, not a frivolous one, such as they had many times given, but one verified by deeds, especially the restitution of the horses spoken of above; that if any one should break the peace in this country, they alone would be presumed to be the guilty ones; that the surrounding villages, interested in its preservation, and enraged by their continual excesses, had their arms in their hands, and that, although very merciful, your Lordship could not do less than approve the use of them unless you should see the most speedy and solid proofs of a true repentance.

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[243] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 34. Also in Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(a), f. 15; *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 282.

[244] The Presidio del Rio Grande, below Eagle Pass.

The Comanche set out with these instructions, manifesting to me the strongest hopes of the success of his commission, but I will not conceal from your Lordship the fact that I expect little result from it. However, I should expect some result if, in case these Comanches should resist making the satisfaction which is asked of them, we should move the Tejas, Nasones, Tancagues, Tuacanas, and Taovayazes to avenge their own grievances, which, as they have manifested to me, they desire to do, only refraining because they need aid with munitions of war to enable them to make a fierce attack. If this were done these thieves, terrified, punished, and put to flight, would cease their rapine; communication and trade between them and these tribes would cease; and mutual hatred and hostility between them would be engendered; while at moderate cost of the Royal Hacienda, directed to the purchase of powder, balls, and arms, our soldiers and citizens might have relief from such hostilities as they have suffered. Meanwhile, your Lordship, when relieved from other serious occupations and being informed of the result, will take the measures which you may think best for the majority.

May God guard your Lordship many years. Taovayazes, April 19, 1778.

I kiss the hand of your Lordship, etc.,

ATHANÁCIO DE MEZIERES.

182. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, MAY 2, 1778 [245]

[LETTER NO. 9] SEÑOR COMMANDANT-GENERAL,

My dear Sir: I have returned to this village of Bucareli without learning other news than that the Xaranames Indians have gone to their mission, with the exception of one called Andrés, who appeared before me at the village of the Quitseis. I ordered two soldiers to mount him on a horse and guard his person, a measure which was approved by the heathen.

This Indian's daughter also has remained behind, because she was absent, but as soon as she returns she will join her father, whom I have delivered to the *justicia mayor* of the village, who will send them to their destination.

There are lacking besides, another man and another woman, called Cayetano and Manuela, whom I will exert myself to secure from the Tancagues, as well as apostates of various nations who live among the Tancagues, and among the Indians of San Pedro and Texas, in which enterprise I shall not cease my vigilance until it is entirely accomplished.

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[245] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 36. Also in Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(a), f. 17; *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 283.

Not having found the Tancagues, who are always scattered and wandering about, I have ordered the traders to bring them before me at Natchitoches, with the purpose of informing them of the all too great knowledge which we have of their misdeeds, which necessarily arise from their idleness and wanderings, and that if they do not cease their roving and immediately form a village, dedicating themselves to the cultivation of the soil, our trade and intercourse with them will cease at once, as a result of which they will find themselves exposed to perish, now from hunger, now at the hand of their enemies.

May God preserve your Lordship many years. Bucareli, May 2, 1778.

I kiss my hand to your Lordship, etc.

ATANASIO DE MEZIERES.

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183. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, MAY 2, 1778[246]

[LETTER NO. 10] SEÑOR COMMANDANT-GENERAL,

My dear Sir: Having completed the brief labors in which the chevalier governor of Tejas employed me, at your Lordship's order, it is now my intention to return to my command, where I will await further orders from your Lordship, that I may execute them, not with the efficiency that would make me worthy of the honor, which I accept with gratitude, but with the zeal which I owe to my worthy chief, from whom this honor comes. And I trust, from your well-known benevolence, that you will bear in mind the merit of Don Antonio Termino, the faithful companion of my peregrinations, a person accomplished, prudent, and capable, who may be trusted with more important charges.

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[246] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 36. Also in Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(a), f. 17; lacking from *Historia*, vol. 28.

May God preserve your Lordship many years. Bucareli, May 2, 1778.

I kiss my hand to your Lordship, etc.

ATANASIO DE MEZIERES.

[Endorsement] I certify that these are copies from the originals which are in the Secretariat of the Commandancy-general in my charge. Chihuahua, September 23, 1778. ANTONIO BONILLA [rubric].

184. CROIX TO DE MEZIERES, SEPTEMBER 10, 1778 [347]

MY DEAR SIR: I have read with particular pleasure the eighteen letters which you send me, written in the months of March, April, and May, of the present year. Your welcome notices, the pleasing, clear method in which you relate them, the zealous toils which you have undertaken in their acquisition, your excellent arrangements, and, in a word, the judicious circumspection, care, prudence, and dexterity with which you have fulfilled my orders are so many additional reasons obliging me to thank you in the name of the king, to commend your merit to his Majesty, and to promise myself the most happy results from your extended and exact reconnoissances; for they facilitate the chief enterprise which I meditate on behalf of the vast provinces of my command.

You have already visited the Taovayases and Tuacanas, have been well received by these Indians, and found in them the good disposition which is to be desired; you have tried to win the Aovajes, or Mahas; you have learned of the inconstancy, fickleness, and bad faith of the Comanches; you have taken your measures to restrain the perverse inclinations of the Tancagües; you have examined at length the lands which they inhabit, their relationships, alliances, customs, and enemies; and, finally, you have succeeded in the reduction of the apostate Xaranames, the most savory fruit of your labors.

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[347] Bancroft Coll., Louisiana.

But, in order that all these fruits may be completely secured, it is necessary that, being advised of the resolutions adopted in the last council of war which I have just held in this villa, and of which I enclose you a copy, you should return immediately to the presidio of San Antonio de Bejar, in virtue of the order which I enclose, to relieve the governor, Baron de Ripperdá, taking charge of the province of Texas until the arrival of the proprietary governor, Dn. Domingo Cavello; and in case he should be already in possession of his office, you will await my orders. In view of this I have sent the appropriate papers to Señor Dn. Bernardo de Galvez, in order that he may not make objection to your temporary separation from the post of Natchitoches nor to the proprietary appointment which I perhaps shall be able to give you, in consideration of your rank, merit, and services. May God preserve you many years. Chihuagua, September 10, 1778.

El Cavro. Delacroix

[*Signature of the Chevalier de Croix, commandant-general of the Interior Provinces of New Spain. From the original in the Béxar Archives*]

Your most attentive and faithful servant kisses your hand. EL CAVALLERO DE CROIX.

Señor Dn Atanacio de Mecieres.

[Endorsement] I certify that this is a copy of the original, dated *vt supra.* ANTONIO BONILLA [rubric].

185. CROIX TO BERNARDO DE GALVEZ
SEPTEMBER 10, 1778[248]

MY DEAR SIR: With a letter dated January 6 last I transmitted to your Lordship a copy of the proceedings of the councils of war which I held in the provinces of Coaguila and Texas to consider details of operations against the Apaches who make war on these territories; and now I am sending copies of the reports of Lieutenant-colonel Don Atanasio de Mesieres and of the last councils which I held in this villa.

In the letter referred to I informed your Lordship that I had reported to the king how important it was that you should come with a corps of hunters of that colony and the friendly Nations of the North to direct the first attack on the frontiers of the two provinces named. But the king in a royal order of the twentieth of the month named,[249] which I enclose, did not deign to grant my request, although he ordered me to open correspondence with your Lordship, that you might afford me all the aid possible of the kinds noted in the royal order.

One of these ways is the following: I have always thought it would be advantageous to have Don Atanasio de Mesieres, commander of the presidio of Nachitoches, whose knowledge, practical experience, zeal, and conduct might contribute much to the success of my meditated operations; I am under the necessity therefore of requesting this officer of your Lordship, not only to take advantage of his useful service by charging him with the commissions set forth in the last council of war, but also in order to confer on him *ad interim* the governorship of the province of Texas until the governor elect, Don Domingo Cavello, shall take possession.[230]

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[248] Bancroft Coll., Louisiana.

[249] For the royal communication referred to see *Document 166.*

But since these measures are most urgent and my distance from your Lordship very great, trusting in your favor and in the zeal which animates you for the best service of the king, I have taken the liberty to direct to Demecieres the official communication of which I enclose a copy, ordering him to return from Nachitoches, where he retired after having concluded his reconnoissances, to the presidio of San Antonio de Bejar. I hope that your Lordship will approve this decision and that you will please tell me what you think of the reports of Demecieres and of the decisions of the councils of war, knowing that I am reporting everything to his Majesty by the next mail.

I remain at your Lordship's disposition, desirous of serving you, and hoping that God may spare your life many years. Chihuahua, September 10, 1778.

The hand of your Lordship is kissed by your most attentive and faithful servant.

EL CAVALLERO DE CROIX [rubric].

Señor Don Bernardo de Galvez.

186. CROIX TO BERNARDO DE GALVEZ
SEPTEMBER 12, 1778[231]

MY DEAR SIR: Although at present I do not think it necessary to institute proceedings looking to the opening of communication and trade between the pueblo of Nuestra Señor del Pilar de Bucarely, situated in the province of Texas, and that of New Orleans, under your Lordship's command, yet I have thought it proper to transmit to you the accompanying copy of a letter of Don Atanacio de Mesieres,[232] in which he asserts that the intercourse referred to would be useful, if carried on by the Trinity River, so that when the time arrives to treat of this matter your Lordship will have present the data which Mesieres gives with respect to the method of conducting transportation and the effects which might be traded.

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[230] For the coming of Cabello see volume 1, 117, *footnote*.

[231] Bancroft Coll., Louisiana.

[232] The reference is to *Document* 168.

Your Lordship already knows that I heartily wish to serve and please you, and with this in view I await your Lordship's welcome orders.

May our Lord spare you many years. Chihuahua, Sept. 12, 1778.

The hand of your Lordship is kissed by your most attentive and faithful servant.

EL CAVALLERO DE CROIX [rubric].

Señor Don Bernardo de Galvez.

187. CROIX TO JOSE DE GALVEZ
SEPTEMBER 23, 1778[258]

Number 266. The commandant-general of the Interior Provinces of New Spain reports the successful outcome of the journey of Lieutenant-colonel Don Atanasio Demesieres to the northern Indian nations

MOST EXCELLENT SIR—MY DEAR SIR: With letter number 148, dated the fifteenth of last February, I transmitted to your Excellency a copy of the proceedings of the council of war which I held in the presidio of San Antonio de Bejar. In consequence of what was agreed upon therein, as soon as Lieutenant-colonel Don Atanasio de Mezieres of Natchitoches presented himself before the governor of Texas, he again set out with a small escort of soldiers to visit the friendly Nations of the North, carrying them gifts and presents such as they like. The good results of this extended journey are related in the sixteen letters which I send herewith to your Excellency and in the summary of these letters which I also enclose. These documents prove the zeal, tact, prudence, aptitude, and efficiency with which Demecieres has fulfilled his important commission; and the useful labors of this officer give basis to the hope of some day seeing successfully carried out the enterprises which I am meditating and to point the way to the accomplishment of others of greater importance, if not by me then by my successors.

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[258] Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(a), f. 45. Also in *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 10, *duplicado.*

They all consist in subjecting the Lipanes and other bands of the Eastern Apaches; for, this being done, there would remain no other enemies than the Apaches of the Gila, who neither commit nor can commit hostilities in the provinces of Coaguila and Texas; and therefore these territories would be put in a state of tranquil peace, which then would be the more easily secured in the provinces of New Mexico, Nueva Viscaya, and Sonora.

The country of the Apaches evacuated,[284] the Comanches, and even the friendly and allied Nations of the North, might give trouble, for perhaps they would come nearer to our frontiers, breaking the peace upon any one of the many pretexts or causes with which the fickle fancy of all barbarian Indians easily permits itself to be preoccupied. But for this the precautionary measures must be reserved till the case arises.

Some, I think, and even many measures might be taken, if my ideas were carried out, by advancing our frontiers with establishments from the last confines of New Mexico along the River Colorado, or Vermejo, to the country of the Taovayases.

This new line would be the palladium of war, but from it to the interior of our now distant frontier there would be no enemies, and the provinces which now suffer hostilities would experience prosperity.

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[284] The meaning of *evacuado* here might be "disposed of," but from what follows the rendering given above seems to be the meaning intended.

The commerce in firearms, powder, and balls, which the citizens of Luisiana maintain with the Indians of the North does not seem to me desirable, for this barter extends from one tribe to another, who supply themselves as the Lipanes and Comanches are doing at present, the worst of it being that while our troops ignore or pay little attention to the correct use of their muskets, the Indians strive with emulation to manage them dextrously, while the astute Lipanes now engage in the manufacture of powder, having learned the ingredients of which it is composed, perhaps, from some of our own people, whose ignorance, weakness, or malice has caused them to commit this horrible offense, and up to the present with impunity, on account of the difficulty of obtaining proof.

But this might be partly remedied through subjugating the Lipanes, for then, that commerce being impeded, the Indians of the North could no longer get firearms, and we would have that advantage for restraining them if they should begin war and for restraining the Comanches if they should continue it.

At present this is impracticable, for, attention being fixed upon the principal object, which is the Apachería, any measure taken against the traders of Luisiana might be disastrous, for they control the Indians of the North, who, without doubt, would rise up, making savage war upon us, doubling our troubles and cares, and the difficulties which oppose the desired tranquillity of these provinces, to which the self interest of these very traders will contribute much.

Secondly, because in case the trade of the people of

Luisiana with the Nations of the North should not be permitted it would become necessary to take more difficult, hazardous, and costly measures to prevent that of the English from the nearby colonies, who lose no opportunity to introduce themselves among the Indians, both for the profit gained from the barter and for the welcome and the gratitude with which the Indians receive and entertain them, since for no Indian of the North is there any jewel more precious than firearms, which they already have in such abundance that they trade them to the citizens of San Antonio de Bejar for any trifle whatever.

Finally, most excellent Sir, up to the present the ideas which took me to the province of Texas have been well received, and I hope that the king will deign to approve them and the Almighty to bless them, since I dedicated them to His holy service and that of his Majesty.

To bring about these important ends I need in that province Lieutenant-colonel Don Atanasio Demecieres, and have requested him of the governor of Luisiana, Don Bernardo de Galvez, confident that he will grant me the assistance of this officer, whom I particularly commend to your Excellency, in order that his Majesty may deign to dispense to him his royal favor now and in due time remuneration for his services.

May our Lord preserve your Excellency many years. Chihuahua, September 23, 1778. Most excellent Sir, your Excellency's hand is kissed by your most attentive and faithful servant, EL CAVALLERO DE CROIX [rubric]. Most excellent Sir Don Joseph de Galvez.

[Annotation in the margin]:

Your Majesty has been informed in detail and with pleasure[255] of the important service performed for you by this officer, and you have resolved that a letter of thanks be sent him, which shall be transmitted through his chief, the commandant of Luisiana, he being requested to report the term of Mesieres's service as lieutenant-colonel and whether he considers him deserving of the rank of colonel. March 1.

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[255] The *duplicado* in Mexico lacks this annotation, as a matter of course.

All this was done on March 6, 1779.

188. SUMMARY BY CROIX OF THE REPORTS OF DE MEZIERES, SEPTEMBER 23, 1778[256]

Summary of the notices communicated to the Government, in sixteen letters, by Don Atanasio de Mesieres, lieutenant-governor of the Presidio of Natchitoches in the colony of Luisiana, of the results of the expedition which he made to visit the Northern Indian Nations

This useful subject made a successful beginning of his peregrinations by going from the presidio of Bejar to the pueblo of Bucareli. In his first official communication he describes the beauty of the valley, watered by the large Trinity River, in which this recently formed settlement is situated, and the advantages which the settlement offers for strengthening friendship with the Nations of the North and of the coast. He suggests the advantage of opening commerce between Bucareli and New Orleans through this same Trinity River, which is navigable; gives an idea of the Indians near this settlement; and reports the fertility of the country which he traveled through all the way from it to the Colorado and Brazos Rivers,[257] not forgetting to communicate the news which he heard of the settlement made by the

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[256] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 13. Also in Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(a), f. 19.

[257] As a matter of fact, the journey was from west to east, instead of from east to west, as would be inferred from this statement.

Carancaguaces, already our declared enemies, on an island of the coast.

In his second letter he states that at a distance of eighteen leagues from the rivers mentioned, going north, he found a ranchería of about twenty Quitseis Indians; that they live in a fertile valley such that it has caused them to separate from the main body of their nation; that in it they plant maize and pasture their horses; and that they are near some abundant salines from which they get a supply of salt for their own use and for trade.

Continuing the account of his journey in his third official report, he states that fifteen leagues westward from this ranchería is the place which they call Parage de la Tortuga [Place of the Tortoise]. Near it live the Tancagues Indians under tents of skin, not having formed a regular pueblo. All told they comprise the number of three hundred warriors. They are inclined to steal, even in our settlements, where during the past years they have done much damage; but they are now restrained by the Tuacanas and Yzcanis, two nations who are at peace with us.

In his fourth report Mesieres states that sixteen leagues from La Tortuga, continuing west, the Brazos River is again encountered; that he found it swollen; but that the prompt aid of the Tuacana nation, which has settled on the opposite bank, facilitated his crossing, and that he entered their rancherías. All received him with welcome, furnishing him provisions, and he at once undertook to bring it about that the Xaranames Indians, long apostate from the mission of Espíritu Santo, of the province of Texas, who had taken refuge with these people, should again submit to instruction, which was agreed upon. This nation has a pueblo of one hundred-fifty warriors; it is situated in a fertile plain bathed by the river, and its inhabitants are industrious and very friendly toward the Spaniards. For this reason, says De Mesieres, he suggested to them how appropriate it would be if they should oblige their neighbors, the Tancagues, to establish a village, in order to live united, to labor, and be respectable, having no doubt this result would be secured.

According to the context of letter no. 5, De Mesieres found another ranchería of the same nation eight leagues in the same direction from the foregoing pueblo, and likewise situated on the Brazos River. This ranchería, he states, has more people than the other, and its lands are better, having timber, stones for lime, mills, building, and paving, and many springs. This whole nation is irreconcilably hostile to the Comanches.

From letter number 6 it appears that from this place request was made for men and pack-animals to conduct the apostate Xaranames to their old mission of Espíritu Santo.[258]

In another letter number 1, De Mesieres reports that it took him seven days to go from the foregoing pueblo to the Taobayaces, journeying north, and that the whole eighty leagues intervening is beautiful and abounds in various species of wild animals and birds.

In number 2 he states that this nation of the Taobayaces live on both banks of the Bermejo, or Natchitoches, River; that they have two pueblos, one with thirty-seven and the other with one hundred twenty-three houses; that each house contains from ten to twelve beds, from which he estimates that there must be more than eight hundred warriors. He adds that the number of women and children is very great. Their clothing consists only of skin shirts, leggins, and moccasins. They use leather jackets and bucklers, or shields, saddles, and campaign tents. They gather abundant harvests of maize and beans, which they keep from one year to another; and in order that they may lack nothing, the river, which is salty, forms there a bank of excellent salt, of which he has sent a sample. They have as bloody enemies the Osages and the Apaches, who do not permit them to enjoy in peace the fine advantages of their country. Their government is democratic; they worship fire with ridiculous ceremonies; they are affable, and dispense hospitality generously toward strangers; but with captured enemies they practice every severity imaginable.

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[258] The request was made of the governor of Texas. See *Document* 173.

From report number 3 is learned the pleasure with which they received De Mesieres and his followers. It is seen that he gave them the present sent them by the governor of Texas in the name of the government; that as evidence of their pleasure they built a spacious house in which to lodge Spaniards who may go there in the future, requesting that some be sent to live among them; that he promised to report this; and that he named the two pueblos San Teodoro and San Bernardo. De Mesieres is of the opinion that it would be very advantageous to establish there a settlement of Spaniards and Tlascaltecos, since the place is the best base in the north for dealing with the friendly nations and for subduing, with their aid, the Comanches and the Osages; for securing full knowledge of distant tribes; for preventing any new undertaking by the neighboring English; for communicating quickly and easily with Natchitoches, Bejar, and New Mexico, from which it is equidistant, and for gathering the plentiful harvest which some apostolic minister may reap there among good, simple Indians, without religion,[259] which may be their reason for not receiving the true one.

As appears from report number 4, two Englishmen arrived at these rancherías in advance of De Mesieres, requesting permission to enter for the purpose of establishing trade and friendship; but the Taobayaces refused to admit them, despoiled them of what they carried, and set them free. The first action, he says, he praised freely, but not the second; and he warned them that the English are their enemies, since they aid the Osages, and that therefore they ought to imprison all who present themselves, reporting to him.

From letter number 5 it is seen that De Mesieres recovered with the consent of the Indians two bronze cannons which were in those pueblos, they having been lost in the expedition of Colonel Don Diego Ortiz Parrilla.

In number 6 he adds that he found ten Spanish captives among them, but that he did not attempt to ransom them, in order not to arouse their greed for this kind of commerce. Concerning this particular, action has been taken.

From letter number 7 is learned the proposal which was made to the only chief of the Aavage and Maha nation who appeared, to the effect that the Indians of that tribe should settle in a pleasant place two and one-half days' journey from the pueblos of San Teodoro and San Bernardo, on the banks of the same Rio Bermejo, to form a bulwark against the Osages, of whom they are likewise enemies; that the chief, being urged by the Taobayaces, agreed to do this; the advantages which this establishment will afford the hunters of Luisiana, through the supplies which they will secure from these new settlers; and the reports which De Mesieres acquired from the same chief concerning the numerous nations living near the distant Rio de Misuris, where at present his people are, and of another nation two days' journey to the west-northwest above his old home, where at certain seasons of the year can be seen the natives who live there on the banks of a great lake, and who use boats, oars, and sails, wear long clothes, and use firearms and sabers. They are brown skinned, and in the opinion of De Mesieres resemble the Asiatics. This is a report so oft repeated that it seems that there is now no doubt of its truth.

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[259] The Sevilla text reads *sus cultos*, but reference to *Document* 175 shows that *sin culto* is the correct reading. It will be noted that in 1772 De Mézières spoke rather favorably of the "elevated" cult of the Wichita.

In letter number 8 this alert and useful subject says that ten Cumanches visited him in these pueblos and reported to him that a band of their people had made a fierce attack on the road from Bejar to Rio Grande, adding that their rapine in the former presidio had ceased, since there is nothing left to steal now, but that they are advancing toward Laredo, where they find the ranches as well supplied as they are defenseless; that this deterred him from visiting them; that he sent them a messenger, telling them that if they did not restore this plunder and cease to do evil, the most savage war would be made upon them by the Spaniards and all the neighboring natives, who are now tired of their continued excesses; but that he does not hope for favorable results unless the Texas, Nasones, Tancagues, Tuacanas, and Taobayaces are moved to avenge their own wrongs, as they desire. To bring this about nothing is necessary except to give them aid in the form of munitions at the expense of the Royal Hacienda, for their disposition is good.

Having now returned to the pueblo of Bucareli, Don Atanasio de Mesieres reports in his last two letters, numbers 9 and 10, that he heard no news on his return except that most of the apostate Xaranames had gone to their mission of Espíritu Santo; that he did not find the wandering Tancagues, but that he will require them to go to Natchitoches for the purpose of obliging them with arguments and threats to form a pueblo; that he plans shortly to return to his post; and that he hopes that he has discharged the commission conferred upon him to the satisfaction of the government, and that new orders may be given him.

Chihuahua, September 23, 1778.

DE CROIX [rubric].

189. LIST OF PERSONS EMPLOYED ON THE EXPEDITION OF 1778[260]

[No. 1] Report which I, Don Atanasio Demecieres, lieutenant-colonel of infantry and governor of the post of Nachitoches, give of the persons who were employed with me in the commission which I performed and the expedition which I made to the villa of San Antonio de Vexar and the Nations of the North, at the order of Señor Don Bernardo de Galvez, pensioned knight of the distinguished Order of Carlos Third, and governor and intendant-general of this province, with a statement of the days which each one of them served. To wit:

Nicolas Fornier, 131 days; Julian Rondin, 131 days; Luis Armand, 18 days; Francisco Trudel, 17 days; Antonio Barbarroja, 53 days; Juan Charnague, 104 days; Antonio Diston, 104 days; Juan Bautista Armand, 104 days; Andres Courbier,[261] 27 days; [total] 689 days.

The six hundred and eighty-nine days shown by the foregoing statement are the total of those which the persons named have respectively served. New Orleans, October 9, 1778. ATANASIO DEMECIERES.

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[260] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 96.

[261] Andrés Courbière later became a famous interpreter.

190. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, NOVEMBER 15, 1778[262]

[DESPATCH NO. 3, NO. 1] SEÑOR COMMANDANT-GENERAL,

My dear Sir: I have had the honor of receiving your Lordship's letter dated the fourth of last May, and of learning of your sincere approbation, which is so well calculated to inflame the zeal of any officer who may have the enviable fortune to be under your orders, and is likewise the best and most desirable prize for which he could wish.

I impatiently await the orders which your Lordship may deign to send to me, and will obey them without delay and without reservation, both to conform to the orders of my chief, who gives me this command, and to follow my inclination, which will never be toward anything else so much as the complete and punctual execution of such welcome precepts.

May our Lord guard, etc., Natchitoches, November 15, 1778.

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191. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, NOVEMBER 15, 1778[263]

[NO. 2] The cruel epidemic which last year attacked Bejar, Bucareli and Nachitos with such fury, and with even greater desolation entered the surrounding villages, appeared to have spent itself, when suddenly it appeared in the remote villages of the Jotars,[264] Quitreis,[265] and Nasones, whence it passed to our Tuacanas, Taobayases, and Cadodachos, whose loyalty, as always, should be well considered. Any misfortune of nations so adorned with such good qualities should be felt as our own. The number of persons of both sexes who have perished among these last exceeds three hundred. But notwithstanding such sad news, I have heard that their harvests have been very abundant, and that they have resigned themselves like civilized people.

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[262] *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 284.

[263] —*Ibid.*

[264] I have not been able to identify the Jotars, but they were in all probability well known under some other name. The form of the name given here may be a corruption of "Yatasí."

[265] See *Documents* 168, 222, for a statement concerning the devastations of the epidemic of 1777.

May God guard, etc. Natchitoches, November 15, 1778.

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192. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, NOVEMBER 15, 1778[266]

[No. 4] SEÑOR COMMANDANT-GENERAL,

My dear Sir: One of the commissions given me by the chevalier governor of Texas in the visits which I made to the Nations of the North was to go to the Comancha nation and request them to desist from their evil life and follow the example of the friendly nations, dedicating themselves to the peace and friendship which the latter were maintaining with ours. But news having come of a recent assault made by that nation in the vicinity of Bexar, I refrained from going to their villages, but sent an embassy instead.[267] It happened a little later, on the same day that I set out for this place, that a small number of Comanches, led by the son of Eneas[268] arrived in the daytime in sight of the ranches of Bucareli, where they turned their horses loose and sat down to rest. This did not give them the appearance of enemies, but, nevertheless, without its even being ascertained who they were, their arrival caused such a stir that the people gathered at the sound of the drum, noisily rounded up the horses, and immediately sent out a squadron. Following the trail of the Indians, who had withdrawn, frightened by the great tumult, which they could not fail to notice, the squadron overtook them on the other bank of the Brazos River. Without first asking the important questions of who they were, what they were seeking, and where they were going, and without waiting to see whether or not defense was necessary before seizing their weapons – by which conference and calmness it is probable that a disastrous attack would have been averted and our moderation and prudence established – they opened fire, killed several Indians, wounded others, put the rest to flight, and despoiled them of their horses. This deed the Comanches have just avenged by carrying off two hundred forty horses belonging to Don Nicolas de la Mathe, who had sent them ahead to this village of Bucareli while he was finishing up his business in Bexar. I regret all this the more since the neighboring Indians have told me that it was the intention of the said Comanches to overtake me, see me, and talk with me in reference to the embassy, already referred to, which I sent to them. Through such a serious mistake the good disposition to which they were inclined may vanish, and affairs return to a worse condition than before, unless with all possible speed there be discovered practicable and effective means to mend them. To this end I have despatched a messenger with the order to go first to the village of the Taovayases, and from there, accompanied by these Indians, proceed to the neighboring Comanches, in order to learn their plans, to appease them, and, by giving them hope of seeing me in their villages, to suspend their inquietude, at least, until my arrival.

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[266] *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 285.

[267] See *Document* 181.

[268] This is undoubtedly a miscopy for Evea. For an account of this attack and the controversy regarding it, see Bolton, *Abandonment and Reoccupation of East Texas*, 124. See also *Document* 214.

May God guard, etc. Natchitoches, November 15, 1778.

Athanacio de Mezieres.

193. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, NOVEMBER 15, 1778[269]

[No. 6] MY DEAR SIR: By the last treaty of peace the country east of the San Luis, or Misisipi, River, from its source, which is yet unknown, to the island on which the city of New Orleans is founded, was left in the possession of Great Britain. This new province the English call West Florida. After repeated obstacles, insults, and vexations, which they experienced from the Indians, they began to settle in the places which to them appeared most suitable, in order to establish their trade,[270] to destroy the legitimate commerce of the vassals of his Majesty, to penetrate his dominions, subvert the natives under his sovereignty, and to show themselves so restless and bold that bitter consequences would have resulted from their enterprises had they not been prevented by the continual watchfulness of our chiefs, and especially of the Señor Governor Galves, who has been repairing the damage ever since the first year of his arrival. Considering that this damage would be aggravated by delaying the remedy, he applied it with such promptness and efficacy – by means of the embargo on the vessels which the English maintain in sight of the metropolis, and under the well founded pretext of their smuggling[271] and boldness – that he gave no ground for complaint to the court at London nor means or encouragement to their merchants to continue their illicit traffic.

Meanwhile, civil discord increased among these pernicious people. Its innate ferocity, entering their own territories, unsheathed the sword against each other, devastated their colonies–most of them a product of their notorious usurpations–and strove to avenge with rivers of blood all their past piracies, making itself deserving of the indignation of civilized nations, and even of the dread and horror of the savages. Then the furor, which had been heard from afar, suddenly transplanted itself, and our Luisiana came to be a witness of such strenuous deeds. A certain Wilum[272] came from New York through the rivers which flow into the Misisipi, with a commission from the American Congress to expel the English whom he might meet. This he did, solely by the terror which he inspired by the sight of his flag, and then he sacked the plantations and burned the houses, loading a frigate (of which he took possession by means of his little barks) with the spoils, which he took to New Orleans and sold. If he had been able to retain his conquests he would have won renown as a famous though a bold adventurer. But the governor of Panzacola without opposition speedily recovered the posts, which he found defenseless and abandoned; and the enemy, advancing again, this time paid for their notable carelessness with their lives and with entire defeat, though they retain the hope that in a short time a sufficient number of their countrymen will come down from the north to dislodge the enemy, guard against their invasions, and prevent such disgraceful manœuvers in future.

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[269] *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 286.

[270] The reference is to the settlement of the English in Tennessee, Kentucky, and west Florida, before and during the Revolution.

[271] See *footnote* 171 on English smuggling at "Little Manchac."

For this purpose a captain has already begun his march, by way of Nachitoches,[273] with officers and troops, to join those who are waiting above, and to participate in the success, of which there appears to be no doubt, in view of the continual desertions of the royalist troops and the emigration of the families, who, moved by fear of greater boldness, seek and find the shelter of the royal standard of our Catholic monarch, some thus reënforcing the regular battalion of Luisiana, and others contributing to the increase of our settlements, having even founded a villa which they have named after their protector and governor, Señor Galvez. Here is the place where the rare talents and enviable gifts of this untiring chief ought to be set forth. Equally respected by both of the English parties, beloved by the Indians, and extremely so by his subordinates, he does not cease to take the surest precautions for preserving the quiet and peace enjoyed constantly by the province in his charge in the midst of such disturbances, or, in case that peace should be broken, to protect it at all hazards. To this end the works and machines of which he is the most subtle inventor, and the love, zeal, and disposition of his subjects, would greatly contribute. But as this is a matter which, to be treated worthily, requires a delicate pen, more polished and swifter than mine, I can only be filled with admiration without being able to express it.

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[272] The reference is to the operations of Captain Willing. See Winsor, *Westward Movement*, 129, 156, 157 and Gayarré, *Louisiana*, vol. iii, 109-114.

[273] Clearly Natchez is meant.

The great eagerness with which your Lordship solicits the good of the service and the happiness of the subjects being known to me, I trust that my account respecting the present state of Luisiana, which borders on the vast territories of your command, will be no less than pleasing to you, since nothing is more flattering to officials of your character and quality than the labors of their worthy followers in the glorious career to which they dedicate themselves.

May God guard the important life of your Lordship many years. Natchitoches, November 15, 1778.

ATHANACIO DE MESIERES.

194. JOSE DE GALVEZ TO BERNARDO DE GALVEZ MARCH 6, 1779[274]

[No. 236] The king has been informed of the expedition made by Lieutenant Colonel Don Atanasio Demecieres, in which he visited the villages of the friendly Indians situated to the north of Chihuagua, through the letters which this officer has written to the commandant-general of the Interior Provinces, Don Teodoro de Croix. From them his Majesty has learned of the prudence and good judgment of Demecieres, and of the skill with which he has performed his commission. In consequence he has decided that he be thanked, and I thank him in the accompanying letter, which your Lordship will address to him, for his Majesty wishes that he shall receive it through your hands. He also wishes you to report the length of Demecieres's service as lieutenant-colonel, and whether you consider him worthy of the rank of colonel.

God preserve your Lordship many years. El Pardo, March 6, 1779. JPH. DE GALVEZ [rubric].
Señor Don Bernardo de Galvez.

195. JOSE DE GALVEZ TO DE MEZIERES,[275] MARCH 6, 1779[276]

By means of the notices which have been communicated to me by the commandant of the Interior Provinces of New Spain, Don Teodoro de Croix, with the sixteen letters which you sent him from the villages which you examined in your visit to the friendly tribes north of Chiguagua, I have made known to the king the important service which you have performed, and his

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[274] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 174, no. 558.

[275] This letter was received by De Mézières at the Kichai village in September, 1779. See *Document* 220.

[276] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 174, no. 559.

Majesty has regarded it with much complacency and gratitude, commanding me to give you, in his royal name, due thanks. This I do with the greatest of pleasure, assuring you that his Majesty will keep in mind your merits and services.

May God preserve, etc. El Pardo, March 6, 1779.

JPH. DE GALVEZ.

Señor Don Atanasio Demecieres.

IX. THE EXPEDITION OF 1779 TO THE NATIONS BETWEEN NATCHITOCHES AND THE MIDDLE BRAZOS

196. DE MEZIERES TO BERNARDO DE GALVEZ, FEBRUARY 7, 1779[277]

SEÑOR GOVERNOR-GENERAL — MY DEAR SIR: Having journeyed toward that city, I have come as far as the Rio de los Caxizes or Rivière aux Cannes, where, meeting with an accident, I determined, in view of the distance from La Punta Cortada and of the bad weather, which continues, and may retard my journey and my recuperation, to return to Natchitoches.[278] I am sorry for this, in proportion to my desire, before my long journey, to make my obeisance to my natural chief, and to obtain from your great benevolence a promise that I shall not be diverted to any position which shall deprive me of the honor and pleasure of living subordinate to your esteemed orders.

I beg your Lordship to send me the commissions of each one of the officers of the company of mounted urban militia which you thought best to establish in this post, in order that in the coming journey a sufficient number of soldiers for my escort may accompany me.

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[277] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 192, no. 1712. On January 26, De Mézières transmitted to Gálvez a copy of Croix's letter of September 10, ordering him to San Antonio [see *Document* 184]. He stated that he regretted that he could not obey as promptly as he would like, because the rivers were impassable, because the militiamen were engaged in the winter's hunt, and because his horses could not be gathered till the floods subsided. Therefore, he asked permission to descend to New Orleans for the purpose of discussing important matters, and of asking that he be not transferred to a new post outside Gálvez's jurisdiction [Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 112, no. 434].

[278] De Mézières evidently started for New Orleans and then turned back, as indicated here. But he descended again, as is shown by *Document* 201.

May God preserve and prosper the important life of your Lordship as long as he can and as I need.

Rio de los Caxizes, February 7, 1779. The hand of your Lordship is kissed by your most humble servant.

ATHAN^{IO} DE MEZIERES [rubric].

197. DE MEZIERES TO BERNARDO DE GALVEZ MARCH 17, 1779[279]

[No. 2] SIR: I assume that it would not be disadvantageous to me, since I am destined to serve under the orders of Monseigneur the Chevalier de Croix, that he should be informed of some particulars regarding the family to which I belong, but I would not have the effrontery to announce myself in that way, and my faith in your goodness causes me to believe that I shall not displease you by begging you to say a few words to him in a letter of which I shall be the bearer. One of my sisters, the Baroness d'Andelot, bears a name known throughout France; the other, the Marchioness de Montessons, married Monseigneur the Duke of Orleans; my uncles, Minard de Clugny, are generals in the army; my cousin of the same name was minister of state; my nephew, the Marquis de Genlis, is inspector of infantry; my niece is lady in waiting to Madame the Duchess Chartres. And would it not be possible, Sir, for you to make use of this information to have M. de Croix place near me my oldest sons, already brevetted by you, and to accord to the two younger ones places as honorary soldiers?

I have the honor to be, Sir, your very humble servant.

March 17, 1779.[280] DE MEZIERES [rubric].

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[279] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 192, no. 146.

[280] This *Document* and also 198 and 199 were probably written at New Orleans, as is apparent from *Documents* 201 and 202.

198. DE MEZIERES TO BERNARDO DE GALVEZ
MARCH 17, 1779[281]

[No. 3] Sir: I beg you, my chief, to approve the decision which I have made, to visit, before going to Saint Antoine de Bexar, the Tancagués, Tuacanas, Taoüiaches, Ollaés,[282] and Comanches. The brevity of this letter, occasioned by the fear that by going into details I might rob your Lordship of precious moments, does not permit me to explain the motives of this march,[283] which your great sagacity will know to be relative to the good of the service. In order to secure the best results from this journey, I need goods which I am unable to procure except in that capital, and of which I enclose the list. I make bold also to ask my chief for some advances for the escort of mounted militiamen who ought to accompany me, but are unable to provide themselves with arms, food, clothing, mounts, and equipage.

I am with profound respect, Sir, your Lordship's most humble and obedient servant. March 17, 1779.

De Mezieres [rubric].

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199. DE MEZIERES TO BERNARDO DE GALVEZ
MARCH 17, 1779[284]

Price current of stock of different classes in the Villa of San Fernando de Bexar and its vicinity

A fat cow	4 *pesos*
A three year old sheep	6 *pesos*
A breeding ewe	3 *idem*
Goats	3 *idem*
Half broken horses	6 *pesos*

Mares in droves, a *peso* a head, and even less

Wild mules, male and female, eight *pesos* apiece on an average

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[281] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 192, no. 148.

[282] The Ovaes, or Pania-mahas.

[283] Specific reasons for this journey are given by De Mézières in *Documents* 210 and 212.

[284] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 192, no. 149.

Observation

To conduct droves of cattle, sheep, horses, and mules, servants are needed, and can be secured at cheap prices. Saddles, bridles, lassos, halters, and *pirol*[284a] are all cheap.

The best season is autumn, when the rivers are fordable and the pasturage good. To go from the Trinity to Bexar it regularly takes fifteen days; and from that pueblo to Los Opeluzas, an equal time.

On account of the very great difficulty of conducting stock and the danger of stampedes, it is impossible to take large droves.

Whenever the Señor Governor may need for the province in his charge the articles above listed, there will be no delay between his request and the delivery, under the condition that they be paid for in money.

In payment a draft on Mexico, Vera Cruz, San Luis Potosi, or Saltillo is as acceptable as cash.

I humbly beg your Lordship to believe that I will be prompt in serving you in any way within my power.

Finally, from the Mission of Espiritu Santo there were twenty-two beeves for sale when I was in Bejar the last time; and this is the mission best prepared to sell cattle at the lowest price. It is forty leagues from Bexar.[285]

200. BERNARDO DE GALVEZ TO CROIX
MARCH 21, 1779[286]

[COPY NUMBER 1] MY DEAR SIR: When the Lieutenant-colonel Don Atanacio Demecieres returned from the former expedition which he made to those provinces, he reported to me that he had employed in his commission the nine men named in the accompanying report, Number 1,[287] for the number of days therein expressed, and that they were incessantly asking that the salaries due them should be paid. As the demand appeared to me just, I ordered that the two thousand, seven hundred fifty-nine reals of silver, the amount for the six hundred eighty-nine days during which they were occupied, at the rate of four reals a day, should be paid by these royal chests, in the character of reimbursements.

[284a] Compare *perol*, meaning copper or kettle. Possibly the word is *frixol*.

[285] It would appear from this that De Mézières was planning to promote the commerce of Texas in so far as the laws would permit it.

[286] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 95.

To undertake the expedition which, in virtue of the request of your Lordship he goes to perform, he has informed me that he needs the goods and merchandise indicated in the accompanying report number 2,[288] to distribute among the nations of the Tancagues, the first and second village of the Taovacanas, the Tauvayaces, the Pani-Mahas, and the Comanches. I have ordered that he should distribute these goods, and that they be paid for, in the same character of reimbursements, from the funds assigned to this province for maintaining the friendship of the Indians.

Likewise, he has asked me for three thousand, two hundred reals of silver to supply the men who accompany him with arms, horses, and other necessities; and as I have granted it to him, I hope that your Lordship will approve these expenses, which I have considered indispensable, and very important for the service of his Majesty in those provinces, and that you will order returned to these royal chests eleven thousand, one hundred eighty-two [reals] and seventeen maravedis,[289] which is the aggregate of the supplementary funds which up to the present they have furnished.

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[287] The reference is to *Document* 189.

[288] The reference is to *Document* 201.

[289] An old Spanish coin, the smallest circulated, worth about one-sixth of a cent, or one-third of a farthing.

May God grant your Lordship many years. New Orleans, March 21, 1779.

The hand of your Lordship is kissed by your most attentive servant, BERNARDO DE GALVEZ.

Señor Don Theodoro de Croix.

201. DE MEZIERES TO BERNARDO DE GALVEZ MARCH 21, 1779[280]

[No. 2] Report of the effects which I, Don Atanacio Demecieres, lieutenant-colonel and lieutenant-governor of the Post of Nachitoches, have received, in virtue of the order of Señor Don Bernardo de Galves, pensioned knight of the royal and distinguished order of Carlos III, governor and intendant-general of this province, from Don Gilverto Antonio Maxent, contractor for presents for Indians, with a statement of the prices at which they ought to be paid for, they being those specified in the contract. To-wit:

	EFFECTS	PRICES	VALUE IN REALS SILVER
27	hatchets	at 8 reals, silver	216
54	axes	at 4 reals	216
27	spades	at 8 reals	216
27	muskets	at 3½ pesos	756
137	pounds of powder	45 sueldos tornés	486
270	pounds of balls	15 sueldos	324
67½	ounces of Limbourg	at 2 pesos fuertes	1080
54	staple shirts	at £6, 5 sueldos	540
27	pounds of vermillion	at 2 pesos	432
27	dozen knives	at £6	259
54	pounds of glass beads	at £3, 15 sueldos	324
27	dozen combs	at £6	259
		Carried over	5108

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[280] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 97. On March 21, at New Orleans, De Mézières asked Gálvez for four hundred pesos for purchasing supplies for his escort, and at the same time submitted a list of goods needed as presents for the Tonkawa, Tawakoni, Taovayas, Panis-Mahas, and Comanches. The aggregate of the goods was the same as that of the list in *Document* 201 [Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 112, nos. 435, 436].

	Brought over	5108
54 rolls of tobacco	at £1	86-17
Two boxes in which to pack these effects, at two pesos		32
		5226-17 [maravedis]

The above-mentioned effects, therefore, are those which the said Don Gilberto Antonio Maxent has delivered to me, and their value amounts to five thousand, two hundred, and twenty-six reals and seventeen maravedis of silver fuerte.[290a]

New Orleans, March 21, 1779.

Atanasio Demecieres.

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202. BERNARDO DE GALVEZ TO DE MEZIERES
MARCH 22, 1779[291]

Notwithstanding the fact that your special merits, notorious not only in this province in my charge, but also in the neighboring one of the Kingdom of Mexico, where you are going, are sufficient to procure you and your sons everything that you might desire from the Señor Commandant-general of those provinces, the Chevalier de Croix, I am sending to you the accompanying letter to him,[291a] in which I ask him to afford you the protection and confidence which you merit and which belongs, incidentally, to the illustrious family whence you come, that he may confer on you the distinction which your birth merits.

God, etc. March 22, 1779.

Señor Don Atanazio de Mezieres.

[290a] A *real* is an eighth of a *peso*, or Spanish dollar. A *sueldo* is a *sou*: a *sueldo tornés* is a *sou* of Tours. For *maravedi*, see *footnote* 289.

[291] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 192, no. 147.

[291a] The letter has not been discovered.

203. BERNARDO DE GALVEZ TO DE MEZIERES [292]
MARCH 22, 1779 [293]

Since the visits which you offer to make to the nations of Indians which you mention in your letter of the seventeenth of the present month, before going to San Antonio de Vejar, your destination, have no other object than the service of God and the king, I approve them, and in consequence have ordered delivered to you the goods listed in the note which you enclose, [stating that they are] indispensable as a means of securing the greatest possible results from the visits, and also the advances which you ask for in order that the militiamen which should accompany you may be provided with what they need for the journey in question.

God etc. March 22, 1779.

Señor Don Atan^io^ de Mezieres.

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204. DE MEZIERES TO BERNARDO DE GALVEZ
MAY [?], 1779 [294]

SIR: The rivers at last permitting my departure, I must begin my march in four days.[295] I repeat to your Lordship, therefore, the expression of deep gratitude which I feel for your kindness. I request its continuation for my family who remain in this post, and the permission, wherever I may be, to report to you my weak services and to claim your honorable protection.

I have the honor to be with respect, Sir, your very humble and very obedient servant.

ATHAN^ZE^ DE MEZIERES [rubric].

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[292] This is the reply to *Document* 198.

[293] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 192, no. 150.

[294] — *Ibid.*, no. 156.

[295] From *Document* 205 it will be seen that he was unable to do so.

205. DE MEZIERES TO BERNARDO DE GALVEZ
MAY [?], 1779[296]

SIR: The overflow of the river, which has flooded more than two leagues of bottom land, prevents the militiamen from taking out their horses without running the risk of their being drowned, this occurrence retarding my departure until the tenth of the coming month.

Your servants stopped here a few days, and, taking advantage of the return of some Spaniards to the Trinity, went there with plenty of powder. The person named Joachin Ortega suffered a severe accident during this journey, having been burned with powder, which left him, I am told, in a pitiable condition.

I have recommended to the Chevalier De Clouet,[297] in your Lordship's name, that he seize M. Armant,[298] inhabitant and merchant of that district, on his arrival in his post, in the interest of Madam le Maine his creditor, and that he seize enough to cover the sums which he owes her.

The commandant will certainly make for your Lordship the map which I detailed for him of the Rivière aux Boeufs, which I have explored recently in all its extent. I have substituted for its ancient name that of Saint Bernard. Being already endowed with the most fertile and highest ground, and the most exceptional and desirable position, it will, without doubt, under this new name, have still greater charms.

I address to the scrivener, in virtue of your Lordship's decree, the suit between the persons named La Serre and David and Le Maine, the parties. The first, who recently came to this place, left it clandestinely and without passport before my return.

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[296] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 192, no. 157.

[297] Le Chevalier Alexander de Clouet in 1775 was captain and lieutenant-governor at Atakapas and Opelousas [letter of De Clouet to Ripperda, April 24, 1775. Ms.].

[298] Eugene Armant later became a prominent trader and commander of the post of Natchitoches. It is not certain whether he is identical with this man or not.

Permit me, worthy and dear general, now that I am about to undertake the mission to which it pleased you to assign me, to renew the sincere protestation of my deep gratitude, and to ask you to permit me to tell you of it as often as I may have the honor to report my services, which I will do as much from inclination as from duty, in whatever state and in whatever place it may please providence to place me.

I am very respectfully, Sir, your Lordship's very humble and very obedient servant.

ATHAN^{ZE} DE MEZIERES [rubric].

Monsieur the Governor-general.

206. DE MEZIERES TO BERNARDO DE GALVEZ

MAY [?], 1779[299]

SIR: The first chief of the Cadaux-dakioux,[300] who has never gone down to that capital, has decided to make this long journey, attracted by your reputation and moved by the strongest desire to see you and know you. This Indian (of whom I have had the honor of reporting to you) is friendly, and is very commendable both because of an inviolable fidelity to us as well as by reason of a courage which never fails. It is to him principally that we owe in this district a constant barrier against the incursions of the Osages; moreover, it is to the love and respect which the villages of the surrounding district show him that we owe the fact that they generally entertain the same sentiments for us.

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[299] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 192, no. 154.

[300] It is not clear whether this was chief Tinhioüen, but judging from *Documents* 207 and 208 it is inferred that he was the son of that chief.

I have the honor to be very respectfully, Sir, your very humble and very obedient servant,

ATHAN^{IO} DE MEZIERES [rubric].

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207. DE MEZIERES TO BERNARDO DE GALVEZ
MAY [?], 1779[301]

SIR: I have made the very greatest efforts to divert the medal chief, bearer of this letter, from his design of going down to the capital, knowing as I do the importunities to which your Lordship is daily exposed by such persons, and desiring to spare you those which you are to receive; but, not having succeeded, I pray your Lordship to take in good part some observations which I am about to make you.

In the address which your Lordship will make to the Cadau-dakioux, it would be well for you to dispel their desire to return to the capital, because of the inconvenience which might result to us if these good savages should come to know the English and become familiar with them, which would naturally result; on the other hand, since a positive prohibition might cause the contrary desire in free and rather insubordinate men, we must make them see their own interest and understand that we fear that so long a journey and the change of climate may injure their health, regarding which it is easy to convince them by examples. I have particularly instructed the person named Jeanot not to land at any English habitation, either during his descent or on his return, and to spread among the savages whom he conducts the ancient and useful prejudice that these strangers are prefidious and poisonous.

The governor will keep in mind the fact that when the post was attacked by the nation of the Natchez,[302] the Cadauxdakioux came to its aid with the greatest zeal; and that to the praise due them for this deed is added that which they merited from the fact that their medal chief died a Christian at the capital and was buried with military honors; that of which his father was likewise worthy; and finally, that which he merits himself, as the worthy successor of these good and valorous chiefs.

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[301] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 192, no. 158.

[302] In 1729.

It is very essential that Monsieur the governor should manifest the greatest confidence in the person and conduct of the commandant of Natchitoches. This confidence is the basis of that of the savages, for their respect for the commandant depends upon the distinction with which they see him treated by his general.

As the Cadaudakioux nation is very much enfeebled by the continual war of the Osages, and since the last epidemic[208] has still more diminished its numbers, it has created a faction amongst them who desire to abandon the great village. This would leave the interior of the country exposed to incursions of foreigners and its Indian enemies, a design so fatal that it will not succeed if Monsieur the governor uses his prodigious influence to frustrate it.

The medal chief being accompanied by all the principal men of the nation, Chase, La Barbuē, and La Peau d' Ours, it will be well for your Lordship to treat them kindly, and to recommend them to love both our nation and their chief. That recommendation will be the seal of his authority.

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[208] In 1777 a severe epidemic swept through the Indian tribes of eastern Texas and western Louisiana, greatly reducing their numbers. On August 25 De Mézières reported to Gálvez the simultaneous deaths of the chiefs of the "Acinays, Bidays, and Nabedakioux" [Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 2358, no. 259]. On November 7 he wrote: "There has passed over this place an epidemic which, after desolating the rancherias of the Natchitoches, Adaes, and Yasakés, will, I fear, continue with equal fury among the remote tribes" [*ibid.*, leg. 112, no. 428]. That his fear was realized is shown by various of his letters here published. At the same time an epidemic afflicted the whites and blacks of Natchitoches. The two scourges may have been one and the same [see Volume 1, *footnote* 104].

Since many hunters of the Arkansas River are introducing themselves among the Cadaudakioux, to the prejudice of their creditors,[804] I pray your Lordship to remedy this abuse by intimating to the medal chief not to receive them in the future, and even to force them to appear in this post, because this sort of hunters, seeking only to flatter the Indians, very often give them very bad impressions.

M. le Chevalier de Villiers has among the Cadaudakioux a savage maroon named Cazard, at whose flight and the asylum which he enjoys he is very much offended. I have not even tried to make this bad subject return; your Lordship will succeed with a few words.

The Madame Widow Piseros,[805] being in the same case, will certainly enjoy the same advantage by the happy interposition of your Lordship.

Finally, as we have nothing more at heart than the peace and the preservation of these vast countries, your Lordship will make known how interested you are in maintaining it among the Cadadaukioux, the Arkansas, and other allies.

I have reason to believe that the medal chief will make the most pathetic representations to your Lordship regarding the deportment of the Osages. Concerning this I do my duty to forewarn you, that you may make him understand how odious this last nation is to you, and that you will make it repent of the rapine and murders which it daily commits, without, however, giving to the chief assurance positive enough to give him grounds for suspecting any breach of word. In case he keeps silent on this subject, it will be well not to speak to him of it, and to await the opening of the question on his part. He is lively and vivacious, and I have never known a man of his color more witty or keener.

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[804] This is an indication that the old trouble regarding "vagabonds" and *coureurs des bois* had not ceased.

[805] Evidently the widow of Juan Piseros, the prominent merchant of Natchitoches.

I have the honor to be, with respect, Sir, your very humble and very obedient servant,

ATHANZE DE MEZIERES [rubric].

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208. DE MEZIERES TO BERNARDO DE GALVEZ

MAY [?], 1779[306]

SIR: I must forewarn your Lordship that two presents are actually due to the grand village of the Cadaudakioux, and the same amount to both the little village of the same nation and to the villages of the Yatassés and the Natchitoches. These goods ought to be sent promptly to the commandant of this post, who will distribute them to interested parties in the prescribed and accustomed manner.

I have not wished to give the grand medal which you entrusted to me to the chief who is descending, because it will be to him more honorable and more satisfactory to receive it from your Lordship's hands than from mine. I reserve, then, the one which I have for the first chief of the Taouaïches, who also merits the greatest consideration on our part.

As to the small medal with which the chief of the Cadaudakioux is already decorated, and which now becomes useless to him, I think that your Lordship will give him great pleasure and the nation as well, by conferring it on his son[307] who accompanies him, recommending to him the sentiments of fidelity and attachment for us such as his father possesses, and exhorting the latter not to spare his counsels to confirm him in this disposition.

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[306] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 192, no. 159.

[307] This was not done. See *Document* 209.

I wish that your Lordship would give audience to the chief dressed in the apparel distinctive of your position. This Indian occupies one of the most important keys to the western country. He will carefully conserve it and also tell to the numerous nations which are his neighbors all that he will have seen and heard. It appears to me well, then, that the dignity of the spectacle and of the assembly should make a great impression on their eyes, while your affability and the solidity of your arguments will assuredly gain their hearts.

The chief demands of me a person named Jeant, a mulatto and an inhabitant of this post, as guide and interpreter. I beg your Lordship to have him given some gratification to indemnify him for his loss of time.

I am with profound respect, Sir, your very humble and obedient servant. ATHAN^{ZE} DE MEZIERES [rubric].

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209. BERNARDO DE GALVEZ TO DE MEZIERES
JUNE 1, 1779[308]

The head chief of the Cados nation who came to this capital to visit me, I received with all the affection and kindness merited by the fidelity, love, and other qualities which you indicate, I keeping in mind in the conversations which I had with him, everything which you suggested to me; and after remaining here some days he returned to his country with a present of considerable importance which I gave him, and decorated with the large medal. With respect to the small one which he had and which you thought proper to give to his son, the father has had the contrary opinion, thinking that he does not deserve it, and saying that because he is young and as the people of his nation have as yet no respect for him, it would be better to give it to another Indian who was with him, worthy of it because of his fidelity, constancy, and love for us, and for the valor which he has shown on the occasions which have arisen. Accepting this opinion and yielding to this representation, I have given the small medal to this person. All this I report to you for your intelligence.

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[308] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 192, no. 155.

God, etc. New Orleans, June 1, 1779.

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210. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, MAY 24, 1779[809]

[COPY NO. 1 — OFFICIAL LETTER NO. 4]

My dear Sir: The freshets of the rivers in this country have been so great and general this spring that, the Nachitoches preventing me from getting my horses, and those further on being impassable, I have been able to comply with the estimable order of your Lordship only to-day, when I commence my march for the presidio of San Antonio de Bexar.

I have made known to the Señor Governor of Luisiana my desire to go into the village of the Tuacanas, convoking the Tancagues there beforehand, in order to make known to these latter the fatherly invitation of your Lordship to desist from their vagabond, miserable life, which one pities, and to deliver up the apostates, who have been solicited so many times and so fruitlessly, and who lead the same kind of life. It being known to me that these Tuacanas and Tancagues are exasperated with each other, are making mutual threats, and are on the point of war, on account of some of those quarrels which are customary among neighbors, I have planned interposing my mediation to keep them in the desired harmony. Finally, different ones have made most bitter complaints to me in regard to the hostilities and rapine which have been committed in their sight at the new pueblo of Bucarely by the Comanches, who, impeding the roads and the passage of our merchants to their villages, are the cause of the scantiness which they experience. They have informed me that on this account they intend to ally themselves with the Texas, Navedachos, Vidais, Nadacogs, and Nacogdoches to make a fierce attack upon the Comanches. This I have prevented, because from it would originate irremediable wars, very much opposed to the lofty plans of your Lordship. I will see if I can induce them to quiet down and keep on the defensive until your Lordship, cognizant of the present circumstances, may deign to signify what you judge most fitting for the satisfaction and tranquillity of all.

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[809] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 40. Also in Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(a), f. 53; *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 238. This and the following letters of De Mézières to Croix constitute his official report of the expedition of 1779.

These resolutions have met with the approval of the Señor Governor, and, in view of the custom of making some gift to the friendly Indians when one treats with them on matters of consequence, he has ordered that the articles which I shall designate be delivered to me, providing, in addition, the manner in which I shall distribute on this occasion, with the greatest economy, the things that may be necessary, reserving for deposit in Bexar those which may be left over, in order to employ them on other occasions that concern the royal service.

The people who accompany me, by disposition of Señor Don Bernardo de Galvez, consist of twenty-seven men from the veteran militia of my district, including a lieutenant and a sub-lieutenant. Adding to these the passengers and my servants, there are in all forty-three persons. They are well supplied with arms, but not with horses, most of these being stallions or mares, which are very thin and in bad condition on account of what they suffered in the overflow of the river. This gives us, in caring for and watching over them, among persons of no experience in this kind of service, the trouble that may be imagined.

The place of Los Adaes, where I am, is the same as that in which existed the presidio of this name. The lands lack irrigation, but, nevertheless, are very fertile, abundant in pasturage, water, timber, stone-quarries, and salines, from which the inhabitants supplied themselves. But even with such surpassing advantages they were never able to rise above the unspeakable poverty which oppressed them until the abuses from which this poverty emanated were remedied by a new regulation and the transference of troops and inhabitants.[310]

May God guard and prosper the life of your Lordship many years. Adais, May 24, 1779.

Señor Commandant-general, your most faithful and humble servant kisses the hand of your Lordship.

ATANASIO DE MESIERES.

Señor Commandant-general.

211. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, MAY 27, 1779[311]

[NO. 2] DEAR SIR: The Sabinas River is thirteen leagues distant from this place of Los Adaes and twenty from Natchitoches; its source is forty from the village of San The[o]doro,[312] and its entire course exceeds two hundred. It runs through plains and forests filled with all kinds of animals. It flows south-southeast, and empties into the Gulf of Mexico, in the neighborhood of the

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[310] The reference is to the removal of the settlements from the frontier in 1772-1773.

[311] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 42. Also in Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(a), f. 54; *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 240.

[312] Taken out of its context the reading would be "forty from the village of San Theodoro, where it rises," but the other is obviously the meaning intended, as it corresponds with the facts.

Post of the Opelusas, which belongs to Luiciana. To navigate it is easy only with canoes or small boats, and this not far from the sea, for, either its small volume or its frequent and dangerous rapids immediately impede navigation. Its freshets are periodic, in winter and spring, and are so much the more to be feared because it inundates a space more than three leagues wide. There is no other river which causes greater trouble.

Near this river is the little village of Ais, for whose benefit the mission of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores, of that name, was founded.[313] It was so unfruitful that all that the ministers gained were labor, sorrow, and expense; for these lazy, insolent and greedy people so satiated themselves with material food that they would not accept that [spiritual food] which was longed for by their [ministers'] apostolic zeal. They number twenty families; their vices are without number; and the hatred which they have won from the natives and Europeans, general. Their country is one of the richest in this province.

May God guard your Lordship, etc. Sabinas River, May 27, 1779. I kiss the hand of your Lordship, etc.

ATANASIO DE MESIERES.

Señor Commandant-general.

212. DE MEZIERES TO BERNARDO DE GALVEZ
JUNE 24, 1779[314]

SIR: A dangerous malady, to which three others have succeeded with such rapidity that I have not enjoyed a single instant of amelioration, has made me give up going to the post of Boucarreli.[314a] I do not know when it will be possible to continue my march. I have nothing nearer my heart, both because of your orders, which enjoin me to undertake it, and on account of the general concourse of nations which ought to assemble at the invitation which I have made them in a known place, which is of greatest importance to check the repeated murders and assaults of the Comanches. It is, then, to cause all these different Indians to wait, that I have decided to leave my detachment and my goods in the neighborhood of the said post of Boucarreli, in order that the frequent news which they will hear of it may nourish their hopes of seeing me and be to them a motive not to disband. I beg you confidently to count on my zeal.

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[313] That is "Dolores de los Ais." The Ais mission, however, was not on the Sabine, but on the Ayish Bayou, at San Augustine.

[314] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 192, no. 160.

[314a] See *footnote* 317.

I have the honor to be, sir, with respect, your very humble and obedient servant. Natchitoches,[215] June 24, 1779. DE MEZIERES [rubric].
Señor Governor-general.

213. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, AUGUST 21, 1779[216]

[NO. 3] SEÑOR COMMANDANT-GENERAL,

My dear Sir: I had hardly left my camp on the Sabinas when I met a despatch from the captain of militia, Don Antonio Gil Ybarbo, in which he informed me of the attack that had just been made, on the Brazos River, upon some Spaniards, both of his jurisdiction and of mine, who were together on their way to Bexar; that in the affray one named Mora was killed and another seriously wounded; that it was necessary for him to follow the aggressors, whom he supposed to be Tancagues, with the few men who remained, the majority of them being absent on the Colorado River, on account of well authenticated disturbances; that their necessary absence left the pueblo which he had recently moved from the Trinity to Nacogdoches[317] exposed to assaults, there being no one in it except old men, children, and women; and that, therefore, I should favor him with prompt aid. At this news, (which is serious, since it causes suspicion of the fidelity of those who were reputed to be friends), I hastened my march, but when at the brow of a steep hill I received such a shock by a fall that fever, delirium, and other symptoms resulted, in consequence of which the injury was considered dangerous. However, I had myself carried as far as the Atoyaque River; but, after passing five days there, in which the seriousness of the injury and the danger became more and more manifest, I consented to be carried by my servants on a stretcher, by which means, with the greatest difficulty and pain I returned to my home, leaving the force under my command in that place, in order that my horses might recuperate, as well as that, my camp remaining there, the Indians might not get the idea that they had been deceived by false reports. At last God has willed that I should improve and be able to continue my route, after having spent two months in bed. I am very sorry for the considerable hindrance and delay in the due fulfillment of your Lordship's estimable orders.

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[215] This letter from Natchitoches is explained by the fact that De Mézières had met with an accident in May after crossing the Sabine and had gone back to Natchitoches.

[216] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 43. Also in Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(a), f. 54; *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 254.

The Atoyaque River is crossed fifteen leagues from the Savinas, ten from Nacogdoches, thirty from its source, and an almost equal distance from the Angelinas, which flows from above and which the Angelinas joins. Its bed is of rock, its water well stocked with fish, and its banks shaded by tall cedars, a most durable timber, suitable for building, and likewise offering pleasure to anyone fond of hunting.

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[317] In the early months of this year Antonio Gil Ybarbo moved his settlement of Pilar de Bucareli, composed of former inhabitants of Adaes, from the Trinity to the site of the old Nacogdoches mission, which had been abandoned six years before.

May God guard your Lordship, etc. Atoyaque, August 21, 1779.

I kiss the hand of your Lordship, etc.

ATANASIO DE MESIERES.

Señor Commandant-general.

214. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, AUGUST 23, 1779[818]

[No. 4] SEÑOR COMMANDANT-GENERAL,

My dear Sir: The Mission of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe was founded with no more profit than the foregoing with respect to the conversion of the Nacogdoches Indians,[819] who soon deserted it, and to the Texas and Navedachos, who constantly lived at it without giving up their heathen ways. At the foot of the hill, on which its buildings remain, flows a beautiful creek of large volume. If it were adapted to the irrigation of the land, there could be no more desirable place to live in; but since the lands are very elevated and consequently sterile when the rains do not fertilize them, they have value only for stock ranches, and none–or only accidental–for cultivation. This has been the experience of the inhabitants from Bucarely in their removal from the Trinity River to this place; for, seeing their labor to be vain through a total loss of their plantings, they wander scattered among the heathen, offering them clothing for food, and exchanging hunger for nakedness.

As a matter of fact, their complaints in regard to the overflow of the river are frivolous, for since they refused to be guided by visible signs which remained from the previous overflows, they should attribute the damage to the bad selection, both of the place in which they built their houses, and of those in which they pastured their cattle, there being no lack of others in sight where they might have been free from such [misfortunes]. And with respect to the fear of the Comanches,[320] in which they again live, it should have been dispelled by the news of the success which they obtained by killing three in the last encounter. To this might be added the fact that the Tuacanas assisted in punishing the enemy, overtaking them in their flight, capturing a woman, whom they voluntarily sent to Bucarely, taking away from them the scalp of Mora, atrocious trophy of barbarism, and making them pay for it with double the number of lives. I will keep in mind this deed, which is a product of that nation's zeal and bravery, in order to give them the thanks which they deserve.

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[818] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 44. Also in Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(a), f. 55; *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 255.

[819] It was founded in 1716 on the site of the present city of Nacogdoches. This

I must inform you that the migration of the people from Bucareli has caused a great murmuring among the neighboring Indians, for, since it leaves the Vidais, who already had reached the coast, and the Navedachos and the Texas, who will not delay moving upon the slightest occasion, exposed to the danger which frontier tribes incur, they charge us with the cowardice which overwhelms them. Finally, if, in order to infuse courage into these families, they should be strengthened by others from Los Adaes, who have remained in Bexar; if all of them should use vigilance in guarding themselves against surprise; and if the militia should be

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place has had a continuous history since that date, except for the years between 1773 and 1779. See *footnote* 317.

[320] As will be inferred, these were the reasons usually given for the abandonment of the site on the Trinity.

given assistance whenever employed in campaigns, I think there would be no more advantageous place than the one recently deserted. For, in it they would derive the benefits from New Orleans which were granted them by the benignity of your Lordship, while the royal service would secure the important advantages which I set forth in my official report no. 1, dated March 18 of last year.[331]

I am indebted to Captain Don Antonio Gil Ybarbo for assisting me with a sergeant of militia from his command, with whom, as he is skilled in these marches, I may consult, for the better ordering of my own journey, and for the instruction of those who accompany me.

I am informed of the great assembly of the Panis-Mahas, a second time united with the Indians of San Theodoro, in the Tuacana villages, where, having heard of my passage and being desirous of seeing me, they await me.

May God guard the life of your Lordship many years. Nacogdoches, August 23, 1779.

I kiss the hand of your Lordship.

ATANASIO DE MEZIERES.

Señor Commandant-general.

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215. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, AUGUST 26, 1779[332]

[No. 5] SEÑOR COMMANDANT-GENERAL,

My dear Sir: Eight leagues above Nacogdoches one arrives at the Angelinas River, and further on, at an equal distance, that of the Neches. Neither is surpassed by the Sabinas, either in the manner of overflowing or in that of causing trouble. The lands which they both traverse are very rich. The first crosses the territory of the Texas,[323] and is not navigable. On one of the banks of the second, which flows near the village of the Navedachos, one sees a little mound,[324] which their ancestors erected in order to build on its summit a temple, which commanded the nearby village, and in which they worshipped their gods. It is rather a monument to the multitude than to the industry of its individuals. The distance from the source of the Angelinas to its ford is two ordinary days' journey, and from there to its junction with the Neches the same. The latter, which is larger, flows into the sea, affording easy entrance. In this an English packet-boat sought shelter in the latter part of 1777 and was sacked by the Atacapas Indians, without anyone learning of the fate of the crew, who perhaps perished at their hands.[325]

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[331] This is *Document* 168. See also De Mézières's arguments in favor of commerce on the Trinity in his letter of October 7, 1779.

[332] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 47. Also in Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(a), f. 57; *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 241.

trans?

The number of the Texas is eighty men, that of the Navedachos being less than one-half as great.[326] Both maintain intercourse and friendship [with the Spaniards], which time has proved. In the last epidemic their chiefs, who were held in much esteem, perished. Their principal men having presented themselves to me, in order that I might elect another, I denied their petition, telling them that this nomination was a prerogative of the governor of the province, since they are included in his jurisdiction, and since he is an officer of higher rank and authority than I.

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[323] The Angelina was the site of the old Hainai village, head village of the Hasinai confederacy.

[324] The reference is to the Indian mounds near the Neches five miles southwest of Alto. The largest was in sight of the Camino Real. This is the earliest mention I have seen of these aboriginal works.

[325] The vessel was reconnoitered by Gil y Barbo.

[326] An error in the *Memorias* copy makes it appear that the number of the Nabedache was twice as large as that of the Hainai, instead of half as large.

May God guard, etc. Village of San Pedro de los Navedachos, August 26, 1779.

ATANACIO DE MESIERES.

Señor Commandant-general.

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216. DE MEZIERES TO BERNARDO DE GALVEZ AUGUST 27, 1779[327]

MY DEAR SIR: Having arrived at this pueblo of Boucareli,[328] whence I am to set out tomorrow for the Nations of the North, and from there to San Antonio de Bexar, I have the honor to report to your Lordship my pleasure at the rumor which is spreading in New Spain that your Lordship is to go to take possession of the commandancy-general of its Interior Provinces, for although we so greatly regret your separation from Luisiana, we must console ourselves with your distinguished appointment.

May our Lord preserve and prosper the important life of your Lordship the many years which I desire. Bucareli, August 27 [?], 1779.

The hand of your Lordship is kissed by your most faithful servant. ATHAN$^{\text{IO}}$ DE MEZIERES [rubric].

Señor Governor-general, Don Bernardo de Galvez.

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217. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, AUGUST 30, 1779[329]

[No. 6] SEÑOR COMMANDANT-GENERAL,

My dear Sir: Setting out from the village of the Navedachos, in which, as in that of the Texas, I found only women, the husbands having departed, some to hunt buffalo, others to visit friendly tribes, I have turned to the right,[330] leaving the highway to follow the shortest road leading to Tuacana. The country through which I have passed for the space of fifteen leagues consists of hills and valleys, with many permanent streams, and vines in such quantity and so distributed that they seem more a result of industry than of nature. Some creep along the ground, and their fruits serve as food for the lean animals; others, in order to free themselves from pillage, marry tall trees, troublesome consorts, whose leafy branches rob them of the benign heat of the sun, although they do not on this account prevent the fruit from reaching a certain degree of ripeness, pleasing to the taste. The muscatel is the ripest, and on account of it we dismounted every little while, appearing more like vintagers than soldiers. If cultivation and industry should come to this spot, I believe that it would gain some renown among the vineyards of highest grade.

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[327] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 192, no. 161.

[328] Then at Nacogdoches.

[329] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 48. Also in Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(a), f. 58; *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 242.

[330] *Document* 216, together with a failure to note the removal of Bucareli, caused an error in volume 1, 119, regarding the route. It is corrected on the map.

A leading Indian of the Texas, who has just overtaken me, claims to have seen on my track at the ford of the Trinity River, distant two leagues from this village,[331] five Comanches, one on horseback and the others afoot. These, at the instant they found themselves discovered, gained the rough and trackless[332] woods, and the investigations which I ordered made at this report to learn what direction they took were unavailing.

Being now in the village of the Quitseis, I am going to continue for the Tuacanas by the same route as last year. Therefore, I will not tire your Lordship's attention by repeating the descriptions of lands, but will limit myself to treating of the occurrences which I may consider worthy of such delicate attention.

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[331] This passage fixes the location of the village at two leagues from the Trinity. Since the Comanche Indians were on De Mézières's trail, the inference is that he had crossed the Trinity, and that the village was, therefore, west of the stream.

[332] *Invios*. The *Memorias* copy reads *invictos*, or "unconquerable."

May God guard your Lordship, etc. Pueblo de los Quitseis, August 30, 1779.

I kiss the hand, etc. ATANASIO DE MESIERES.

Señor Commandant-general.

218. BORME TO BERNARDO DE GALVEZ AUGUST 30, 1779 [383]

MY GOVERNOR: I received on the 25th, by M. Rose, who left Opelusas the 22d of the same month, the dispatches which you addressed to M. De Mezieres, Don Antonio Gil y Barbo, Juaquin Hortega, and Francisco Garcia, who has read your letter, having just arrived at that moment and being obliged to depart tomorrow for the town. I have resealed the packet which I am sending to Juaquin Hortega, and which I send, the same as the former ones, to Capue, by a messenger named Louis Bayonne as far as Nacodoches, with instructions to have given to M. De Mezieres the packet which concerns him.

I have found the enclosed letters with which you honored me, dated June 28 and July 3 and 31, and I will conform with scrupulous exactness to the orders which you have given me.

There have arrived at this post from St. Antoine, Don Juan Bautista y Surrieta, Don Miguel Minchaca, and Pacheco, who are hastening to go to the capital to see your Excellency. They are taking some horses, of which they will tell you the number, as well as their intentions regarding them.

I have learned by these men that M. De Mezieres was going to leave Nacodoches at once on his mission. There is no other news at this post, and everything is quiet.

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[383] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 192, no. 162.

I have the honor to be with profound respect, your very humble and very obedient servant. Natchitoches, August 30, 1779. BORME [rubric].

To my governor, his Excellency Don Bernardo de Galvez.

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219. DE MEZIERES TO BERNARDO DE GALVEZ
SEPTEMBER 4, 1779[334]

SIR: I have received the letter which your Lordship was pleased to write me regarding the one with which our worthy minister honored me. I will not tell you anything of my gratitude for your kindnesses, for could I do it? And what terms would be capable of expressing to you that which I always have for what I owe you? I have had the honor to testify to you, and I repeat it, that the best epoch of my life has been that in which I have had the satisfaction of seeing myself under your orders; and this avowal is well credible, sir, when it is made by one who is not less attached to you by duty than by inclination. I enclose the copy of my letter for his Excellency. I beg you to send it to him and to remember to send me the notes which are so necessary to me for the conclusion of my work.

I have the honor to be with profound respect, sir, your very humble and obedient servant.

ATHAN^{ZE} DE MEZIERES [rubric].

Village of the Quitseys. Sept. 4, 1779.

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220. DE MEZIERES TO JOSE DE GALVEZ
SEPTEMBER 4, 1779[335]

MOST EXCELLENT SIR — SIR: I have received with due respect the letter which by order of the king, my master, God preserve him, your Excellency did me the honor to send me under date of the sixth of March last,[336] which has been delivered to me in this place and road, leading to San Antonio de Bexar, whither I am going in conformity with the order of my chiefs, the chevalier governor of Luisiana and the commandant-general of the Interior Provinces of New Spain. I confess that I am no less confused in view of so great an honor,[337] having performed little or no service, than short of the words in which I would wish to express the mortal gratitude which I render for so signal an honor. But this will be done, in so far as it may be able, by the zeal which animates me for the service of his Majesty; and I trust in the innate benignity of your Excellency that you will bestow on me your enviable protection. May our Lord guard and prosper the important life of your Excellency the many years which I desire. Village of the Quitseis, Sept. 4, 1779.

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[334] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 192, no. 163.

[335] — *Ibid.*, no. 164.

Most excellent Sir, your Excellency's hand is kissed by your most faithful and humble servant,

ATANACIO DE MEZIERES.

Most excellent Señor Don Josef de Galvez.

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221. DE MEZIERES TO BERNARDO DE GALVEZ
SEPTEMBER 4, 1779[338]

SIR: I received with the most profound respect the letter which his Excellency the Minister of Marine and of the Indies did me the honor to address to me in the name of the king, and which your Lordship had sent to me, an honor so signal that I avow both the confusion which it causes me, in view of the mediocrity of my services and of my lack of words in which to attest my heartfelt gratitude. May it please Heaven to furnish me opportunity to prove it to the measure of the zeal which animates me, and to render myself in some way a worthy subaltern of such a chief as you.

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[336] The reference is to *Document* 195.

[337] The honor referred to was the inquiry made by the king as to whether De Mézières merited promotion to a colonelcy.

[338] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 192, no. 165.

I have the honor to be very respectfully, sir, your very humble and very obedient servant.

ATHAN^{ZE} DE MEZIERES [rubric].

Village of the Quitseys, Sept. 4, 1779.

222. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, SEPTEMBER 5, 1779[339]

[No. 7] SEÑOR COMMANDANT-GENERAL,

My dear Sir: Two leagues from the first village of the Tuacanas I met a large party of the Tancagues, who were awaiting me there. They at once dispatched messengers and made signals with smoke, in order to report my arrival to others, who were hunting in the vicinity. They have informed me that the chief to whom the cane and flag had been given (which they plan to carry to Bexar, since I am not authorized to give them to another, as they request), has died, together with many prominent old men, the head chieftainship falling now upon an Apache, who, after being a captive, was adopted, and, finally, on account of his prowess,[340] enjoyed the greatest support and following.

This person, whom we know by the burlesque epithet of El Mocho [The Maimed], because he lost an ear while fighting, has proved himself restless, a lover of disturbances, and very capable of stirring them up, by force of a certain eloquence which he knows how to adapt to the nature of the tribe in which he has become naturalized. No one has been more opposed to us, as was shown by his presence and ferocity in the sacrilegious sack of the mission of San Sabas, and afterwards by repeated insults, of deed or word, by which he showed himself to be a perfidious enemy to us. Consequently, the Baron de Ripperda urged me to neglect no means of freeing ourselves from such a detestable enemy. Accordingly, I had already arranged with three of the chief men of his own nation, whom I knew to be his rivals, that they should conduct him to Natchitoches, under the promise that he would share in the presents which I intended for them, and make an end to him on the road, being sure that there would not be lacking something to which to attribute his death, without causing suspicion of anything unnatural. This plan would have been carried out had it not been for the epidemic, which, taking away my agents, left in authority the one whom it was most desired to have meet his doom.

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[339] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 49. Also in Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(a), f. 58; *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 242.

[340] The *Memorias* copy reads *prendas, y proezas* [F. 243].

The aspect of things having changed so much in his favor, I simulated[341] the rôle of a true friend. I went to visit him with the troops and the royal standard; showed him the favors that are customary with more esteemed persons of his class; took him to my tent, and had him stay to dinner. His gratitude being evident, I assured him that if his people should congregate in a village, build houses, apply themselves to the important occupation of cultivating the soil, and continue the due harmony with the Tuacanas, he would deserve not only my affection but also the powerful protection of your Lordship; that their scandalous and stormy discords were not unknown; and that, seeing himself surrounded by enemies, he ought to make a solid peace with those who were not such.

> For, brother, [I told him] since we are all brothers, what opinion would be formed of me if you should break the bonds of such close relationship? Would the news of the just punish-

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[341] *Revesti.* The *Memorias* copy reads *resenti.*

ment which would be given to such infidelity bring tears to any eyes?[342]

Being moved, he replied to me that the chevalier governor[343] of Texas had urged him to do the same: that in accordance with the promise he had given to do so, he had gone to Bucarely so that, in agreement with Captain Gil Ybarbo, he might select a place in that neighborhood suitable for dwellings and fields, and with facilities for trade and for prompt assistance, if this should be required by a new entrance of the Comanches; that, finding the settlement in silence, the houses empty, the artillery drawn to the bank of the river, and the stock scattered, he knew it to be abandoned; that, true to his word, he had proposed to establish himself in the pleasant site of La Tortuga as soon as he should return from Bexar, where the above-mentioned chevalier governor had again called him; that, the news of my march having reached him, he had suspended his own; that he remains all the firmer in his decision[344] because it is generally applauded by all; that if he should not comply with it at once, he would submit to the withdrawal of friendship and all assistance whatsoever; that, in regard to the Tuacanas and other matters, it would only be necessary that your Lordship should command it, and, at your Lordship's slightest suggestion, he would willingly sacrifice his private grievances and do everything possible to dispel the differences, however deeply rooted they might be.

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[342] The enmity between the Spaniards and El Mocho continued, and finally, on July 12, 1784, when he entered the Presidio of Bahia del Espiritu Santo with only three companions, he was murdered in cold blood at the order of the captain, acting under instructions from the governor. Luiz Casorla to Cabello, July 12, 1784 [Ms. in Sección de Historia of the Archivo General y Público, Mexico, last *expediente*. Cabello to Phelipe de Neve, July 15, 1784. *Ibid.*].

[343] The *Memorias* copy adds here the word *actual*.

[344] *Resolucion*. The *Memorias* copy reads *reducción*.

Some Indians of the missions of San Antonio de Bexar having presented themselves to me, I embraced them and gave them to understand how pleased I would be if they would accompany me, to which they consented, expressing the same pleasure. Because of this, I refrained from urging their restitution, partly through fear that they would be frightened and would hide, and partly in the hope that, as they had resolved to go to places where they would meet their ministers, these latter might have the consolation that the reduction would be all the more lasting because voluntary, since thus they would owe it solely to the efforts of their own charity and zeal.

In conclusion, the requests which the said Mocho made of me were so sincere and so repeated that they persuaded me to pass the night in his camp. We spent it in conversation which has led me to think that when one lacks means to conquer the wicked by force, one must seek a way to do it by cunning; the first method is of value among politicians; the second is worthy of the Christianity and humanity of your Lordship.

May God, etc., Brazos River, September 5, 1779.

I kiss the hand, etc. ATANASIO DE MESIERES.

Señor Commandant-general.

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223. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, SEPTEMBER 7, 1779 [248]

[No. 8] SEÑOR COMMANDANT-GENERAL,

My dear Sir: The rejoicing, preparations, and generosity which the nation of the Tuacanas have displayed in my reception have been in keeping with the opinion I already had of their loyalty. Their chief having come to me with signs of grief, which I learned was caused by one of his brothers having just died, I assured him, with tears, of my sympathy. At sight of my tears his face became calm, and there remained on it no signs of sorrow, although they had been natural enough to make me sad.

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[248] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 53. Also in Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(a), f. 61; *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 245.

I told him of the good disposition which El Mocho had manifested toward me, which he learned with great complaisance; and El Mocho having appeared for the purpose of returning my visit, I had them shake hands and embrace, and had the village crier ordered to proclaim in a loud voice that the Tancagues must be treated with affability in it. This order was carried out, and the entire day was spent in banqueting, dancing, and merry-making.

The news has been confirmed to me that there had come together here many Indians of San Theodoro and of the Panis-Mahas. After awaiting me for a month and a half, they returned to their villages, having heard it said that my illness had become more serious, and despairing of seeing me, because of the slight hope they had for the recovery of my health. I regret that my wormy and crippled horses will not permit me to visit such good friends, although I assure myself that I shall see them in Bexar, on account of the news they will get of my residence in that villa, and because of their desire to discuss matters of importance, such as quieting the Comanche, removing the hindrances which they cause to trade, and restoring the security of the highways.

I have learned that four of the Xaranames who were restored last year to the Mission of Espiritu Santo have returned here as fugitives; that the chief of the Tuacanas[388] received them in his house, keeping to himself his plan to deliver them on my arrival, and that they, suspicious of his intentions, asked him, two days before, permission to absent themselves for a single day. This they employed in another flight, and it is not known whither they went.

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[388] The *Memorias* copy gives the name "Tuacamanes," obviously an error.

I propose setting out as soon as the numerous leading men who have gone to secure meat return. They all plan an expedition against the Comanches, now because of their insults at Bucarely, which settlement, so near theirs, they regarded as their own, and again to avenge the killing of a Texa Indian who accompanied me, perpetrated almost in sight of the village, and on the night following my arrival.

The Tancagues remain since the last epidemic at the number of one hundred fifty; the Tuacanas, to whom it was very fatal, have one hundred men more;[847] among the Indians of San Theodoro and the Panismahas, where it fell with less force, there was not so great a diminution; among the Comanches, none.

May God guard, etc. Tuacanas, September 7, 1779.

I kiss the hand of your Lordship, etc.

ATANASIO DE MESIERES.

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224. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, SEPTEMBER 13, 1779[848]

[No. 9] SEÑOR COMMANDANT-GENERAL,

My dear Sir: This being the day assigned for the assembly of the Tuacanas and Tancagues Indians, we all gathered under the shelter of a spacious arbor, each one sitting in his proper place, I in the center, with the chiefs on each side. Ordering silence and attention through the public crier, I made to all of them in common the same speech that I had made to the chiefs privately, being assured that, having won their individual approval, I should gain the public consent. The substance of my discourse was as follows:

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[847] The *mas* may possibly belong to the clause which follows it, in which case it would mean "but," and the number of the Tuacanas would be one hundred fifty. However, the meaning seems to be that of the translation.

[848] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 55. Also in Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(a), f. 62; *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 246.

> That they were aware that, since my last arrival, the Emperor of the Spains and the Indies had placed in these extensive lands of his dominions a head chief, who represented his Majesty with so much authority that he commanded all of us captains, just as we did our subalterns,[849] and with such kindness that we rendered him equal obedience and love; that this exalted chief regarded with unspeakable satisfaction the friendly Indians, especially those of this territory; that the thing with which he was more and more charging his subjects, the governor of Texas and the commander of Natchitoches, was to consider and treat them likewise; that his Lordship promised himself, as a result of their fidelity, the firm maintenance of the alliance and harmony with the Spaniards as well as with the bordering tribes; that one of his greatest desires was that the Tancagues should make a fixed settlement and remain in it, cultivating their land, and renouncing their wandering mode of life, since this was important for their own quiet and prosperity, and that they should not henceforth cause the least suspicion as to the uprightness of their conduct; that thus they would enjoy our friendship, intercourse, and trade; that they were not ignorant of the unceasing incursions and insults of the Comanche, on account of which his Lordship had not felt for them the same affection as for the rest of his children; that he considered them a menace to the tranquillity of such beloved ones; but, that, considering the fact that these had so many enemies, he exhorted them (and exhortations of the father are superior orders) that by means fitting their peaceful nature, they should invite, incite, and force them to be their friends; that in case of resistance another means would be resorted to; that in the meantime it would please him if they should have the axe raised, not letting it fall to give blows, but to prevent them, until advice should be received from the superior will, which would always have in view their greatest good; and, finally, since the Tancagues were ready to accompany me, and the Tuacanas likewise disposed to come with the Tauoyases and Panis-mahas, and to invite the Comanches to follow them, to-

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[849] The reference is to the new commandant-general, Theodoro de Croix.

gether in Bexar they would hear from the mouth of the governor the same expressions as from mine.

They applauded and replied unanimously that they were obedient sons; that as such, they would do whatever was proposed to them; that they urgently entreated your Lordship not to remove his benign eyes from these villages, but to continue giving them the love of a true father.

The discourse having been finished, I thanked them on your Lordship's behalf for their devotion and loyalty, making them a moderate gift, and we parted with mutual satisfaction.

May God guard the life of your Lordship. Tuacanas, Sept. 13, 1779.

I kiss the hand of your Lordship, etc.

ATANASIO DE MESIERES.

Señor Commandant-general.

225. LIST OF PRESENTS GIVEN THE TUACANAS AND TANCAGUES, SEPTEMBER 13, 1779[380]

(a) Report of the articles which the Lieutenant-colonel Don Atanasio de Mesieres has received, by order of the Señor Don Bernardo de Galvez, as a present to the friendly nations situated to the north of Bexar:

54	tomahawks
27	hatchets
27	spades
27	guns
135	pounds of powder
270	pounds of shot
67½	ells of blue cloth
54	shirts
27	pounds of vermillion
27	dozen knives
54	pounds of glass beads
27	dozen combs
54	packages of tobacco

Village of the Tuacanas, September 13, 1779.

ATANASIO DE MESIERES.

(b) Memorandum of the articles which the Lieutenant-colonel Don Atanasio de Mesieres gave to the first

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[380] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 56. Also in Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(a), f. 64; *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 248.

Tuacana village, called that of Quiscat, in the name of the Señor Commandant-general:

6	tomahawks
3	hatchets
3	spades
3	guns
18	pounds of powder
36	pounds of shot
8	ells of cloth
7	shirts
3	pounds of vermillion
3½	dozen knives
7	pounds of glass beads
4	dozen combs
8	packages of tobacco

Memorandum of what was given to the second village of the Tuacana, whose name is Village of Flechazo: the same as the foregoing.

Memorandum of what was given in the same way to the Tancague nation, whose chief is named Tosche,[351] *alias* El Mocho: the same as to the others.

Summary of what has been given to both villages of the Tuacana and to the nation of the Tancagues:

18	tomahawks
9	hatchets
9	spades
9	guns
54	pounds of powder
108	pounds of shot
24	ells of cloth
21	shirts
10½	dozen knives
21	pounds of glass beads
12	dozen combs
24	packages of tobacco

Tuacana Village of Quiscat, Sept. 13, 1779.

ATANASIO DE MESIERES.

(c) Memorandum of the articles which have been left over, to be deposited in Bexar:

36	tomahawks
18	hatchets
18	spades
18	guns
162	pounds of shot
81	pounds of powder
43½	ells of cloth
33	shirts
18	pounds of vermillion
16½	dozen knives
33	pounds of glass beads
15	dozen combs
30	packages of tobacco

Tuacana Village of Quiscat, Sept. 13, 1779.

ATANASIO DE MESIERES.

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[351] The *Memorias* copy renders the name "Tosque."

226. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, SEPTEMBER 22, 1779[382]

[No. 10] SEÑOR COMMANDANT-GENERAL,

My dear Sir: Having supplied my troops with provisions, which the Tuacanas furnished me, as well as with horses, of which they traded me good ones for those of little use, I am now fifty[383] leagues from their village. The direction which I am taking is south-southwest; the road, none. The lands are superior to any others I have seen. There are broad plains, rich pastures, delightful woods, most abundant streams. Indeed, in the short distance which I have mentioned, I have crossed, besides the beautiful San Andres River,[384] seven others of less importance, and at such well apportioned distances from each other that they seem to exist there to accommodate the traveler.

The chief Mocho and some of his people set out with me, and on the second day he was joined by those who were assigned as his following. Their number is seventy-five persons, including six fugitives from the missions, most of them mounted. Their offensive weapons are firearms, bows, and spears; their defensive armament, skins, shields, and leather helmets with horns and gaudy feathers. The country being dangerous, through its being frequented by the Apaches, they use great precaution; they explore the land, choose the most advantageous places to pitch camp, and post sentinels; they are exhorted morning and evening that their sleep be short and light; they arise at dawn to bathe; they give no chance by straying off from the march for being surprised by the enemy. Such is the natural instinct among human beings for self-preservation that even in the un-disciplined barbarian one should praise their care and skill to this end.

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[382] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 58. Also in Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(a), f. 66; *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 249.

[383] It would seem that De Mézières over-estimated the distance from Tuacanes, especially as he appears to have started from the lower village.

[384] The Little River. It is given as the San Andrés on old maps.

No chief exerts himself to have a following; he knows that when there is no pay there is no obligation; neither is he responsible [to his followers] for results, though volunteers are never lacking. They are not invited by words, however, but by deeds. If a campaign is planned, the leader first fasts; if he hunts or travels, he first feasts; from imitation or from association comes fellowship; from fame, persuasion; from talents, love; from love, authority. To those who present themselves, remain, or go back, it is said alike, "It is all right." Thus they are enlisted, free, or privileged, without gratitude or ill feeling, without merit or note. One is caused to wonder at a liberty which keeps in harmony peoples seemingly irrational, but would cause the fall of those who flatter themselves that they are more prudent and wise!

The extreme neglect of the Indians to carry supplies would be criticised by one who did not know of their activity and sagacity in providing themselves with necessities; their temperance when these are lacking; their slight aversion to the most repugnant things. No longer are its rapid flights of avail to the turkey; to the deer, rabbit, and hare, their timidity and fleetness; to the turtle, its hole; to the skunk,[388] its stink; to the viper, its deadly poison; I have seen them all buried in the stomachs of my friends, the Tancagues. Meanwhile, on my getting further away from the settlements, which drive the wild cattle from their neighborhood, they had better food, and their noisy glee in consequence was expressed in discordant songs.

In truth, one cannot exaggerate the inestimable benefits for which these natives are indebted to divine providence. The buffalo alone, besides its flesh, which takes first place among healthful and savory meats, supplies them liberally with whatever they desire in the way of conveniences. The brains they use to soften skins; the horns for spoons and drinking vessels; the shoulder bones to dig and to clear off the land; the tendons for thread and for bow-strings; the hoof, as glue for arrows; from the mane they make ropes and girths; from the wool, garters, belts, and various ornaments. The skin furnishes harness, lassos, shields, tents, shirts, leggins, shoes, and blankets for protection against the cold–truly valuable treasures, easily acquired, quietly possessed, and lightly missed, which liberally supply an infinite number of people, whom we consider poverty-stricken, with an excess of those necessities which perpetuate our struggles, anxieties, and discords. But woe to him who, on account of the corpulence of this animal, should doubt its agility, or who, having rashly wounded it, persuades himself that he will always encounter the same tolerance of offense. There is a time when the bull, enraptured by the delights of love, becomes enraged at the hunter who disturbs his joys, with the same fury which he feels against his rivals. There is another when the cow, having brought forth young, shows no less anger on being separated from it. Their insidious heads, hid by a very thick mane, are armed with black, pointed, and curving horns; their spinous humps resemble those of the camel; their bodies are covered with brown wool, soft as that of ewes; their bushy tails appear at the end like that of a lion. They are tremendous brutes, in which are united deformity, to terrify; a temper, to infuriate; ferocity, to attack; unbounded strength, to obtain disastrous results.[388a]

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[388] The word is *zorrillo*, which means "fox" and also "skunk"; the context clearly suggests the skunk.

[388a] The *Relación Postrera* of the Coronado expedition need no longer be cited as the classic statement of the relation of the Indian to the buffalo.

Few rivers can compare with the San Xavier,[356] unfaithful depository, whose very clear waters reveal and deliver up an abundance of trout, carp, eels, and other savory fish. Obedient, these waters would irrigate the surrounding plain, assuming the burden should those of the sky fail. Then, industrious, they would grind the grain, after having coöperated to increase its yield. From the incredible quantity of cattle and horses which graze on its banks will be obtained those needed for labor, for breeding, and for food. For variety, the buffalo will not be lacking; while with thyme, lavender, sage, winter savory and other aromatic plants, the sheep and goat will delight. At the same time that their fragrant flowers, bright adornment of the fields, furnish the supply which delights the bee, she will recompense the benefactor who takes pains to gather her in and reduce her to domestic life. Hogs will be fattened free of cost on the acorn, without the granaries having to contribute to their costly fat. Prime oil will be obtained from the nuts, and whenever the bears wish to partake of them, they will yield a not inferior quality of lard, the danger being compensated by greater profit. There will be found in the woods, in greatest variety, lumber for building; in the quarries, all kinds of stone. The substantial houses which will be constructed, little heedful of the attacks of time, will be enjoyed by the grandchildren of the builders.

The proximity of Bexar, of the Tuacanas, the Tancagues, the Indians of San Theodoro, the Panis-mahas, and other friends, will result in frequent visits, trade, assistance, confidences, and reconciliations. [The settlement of this river] will bring about the quieting or punishment of the Comanche; will furnish the shortest and safest communication with the adjoining Luisiana; and finally, will arouse in the subject greater desires to traverse, visit, and inhabit this extensive territory, at sight of which I have been unable to refrain from rapture and ecstasy, which, indeed, would be occasioned in the most stupid and indifferent.

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[356] The present San Gabriel River.

The San Xavier River rises in the hills which extend westward from the Tuacanas to the vicinity of the extinct presidio of San Saba. It receives the waters of the San Andres and other smaller tributaries, and joins the Brazos. The latter, according to the commander of Bucarely, does not empty into lagoons, like those of the coast, but breaks impetuously into the sea, challenges it proudly with elevated banks, officiously invites these banks to have a castle erected to defend its entrance, and offers shelter to navigators and conveniences to whosoever may examine the vast and uninhabited lands which it waters.

I shall not leave unmentioned the prodigious quantity of oyster shells, some entire and some broken apart, some in fragments, but the greater part united and adhering together. They appear to be of the remotest antiquity, and may be seen anywhere in this country, in heaps or scattered about.

May God guard the life of your Lordship. San Xavier River, September 22, 1779.

I kiss the hand of your Lordship, etc.

ATANASIO DE MESIERES.

Señor Commandant-general.

227. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, SEPTEMBER 25, 1779[257]

[NO. 11] SEÑOR COMMANDANT-GENERAL,

My dear Sir: Ten leagues from the San Xavier River I crossed the Colorado; at the same distance from the latter, the San Marcos; six leagues further on, the Guadalupe; and after coming eight leagues more, I am now on Arroyo Salado,[388] near Bexar.

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[257] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 64. Also in *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 253; lacking in Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(a), but the extract is given in *Ibid.*, f. 89.

The country being on the whole similar to the foregoing, I omit a description of it, so that I may not be guilty of the vice of tedious repetition.

The Colorado River arises above the San Sabas in a high and rough range of hills, where the Brazos also has its source. Both run almost parallel with the Sabinas, the first with such rapidity that it continually tears away its shores, forming banks of the sand which it carries along, and as a result loses itself ingloriously in lagoons, without leaving trace of its entrance or permitting navigation. Near its ford, one sees a hill which is called the Iron Hill,[388a] because of the abundance of this metal which it contains. This metal, however common, merits appreciation and gratitude from us because, when we were striving to conquer these Indies, it helped us gain possession of the richest metals without revealing itself to the natives, who would have employed it in their defense. At the foot of this hill flows a creek, sufficient for industrial purposes, excellent stones for ovens, and firewood for foundries.

Having halted near the head of the San Marcos River, a worthy rival of the San Xavier in respect to the conveniences which it offers for settlement, I have seen with wonder that it owes its origin to a huge rocky bluff, which emits from an ill-proportioned mouth such a volume of water that it at once becomes a river. One sees in the neighborhood several caves, with wonderful formations; here are some steps, an altar, frontal, candlesticks, and a font; there, curtains, festoons, flowers, images, and niches, all so clean that they appear to be in some one's charge. And there is no lack of benches, which invite the spectator to contemplate at leisure figures, some sacred, some profane, upon which nature has spent so much care that our Europe may well grieve at not being endowed with their equal.

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[388] It still bears this name.

[388a] *Loma de Fierro.*

The Guadalupe, in no way inferior to the San Marcos, which joins it, supports a great quantity of cypresses and cedars. These cedars are high, thick, and very easily conformed to the will of the carpenter. From them[359] are obtained masts, planks, beams, staves, barrels, canoes, and all necessaries for the use and adornment of houses; of its bark roofs are made; of its roots, stopples, if cork is lacking; of the balsamic substance which is distilled from it, a specific remedy for cuts.

The Arroyos Cibolo, Salado, and Arcon swell the volume of the Guadalupe, which empties into the Bay of Espiritu Santo.

In the year 1772, when I was going to Bexar with the principal Indians of the north to ratify there the treaties which had been obtained by the Baron de Ripperdá, we all lodged in a grotto situated on the summit of a high hill, which serves as one bank for the Arroyo del Arcon. It is seventy varas[360] long and eight wide, with a cliff in front from which one can see the bottom of the river. Eleven pillars arise in it, sustaining the arch, which is curiously incrusted with sea shells, whose lustre has been preserved against the inclemencies of the seasons by the shelter which they enjoy. Here is where modern philosophers, bold scrutinizers into the arcanums of nature, might originate fantastic systems, food for erroneous thoughts that gain contempt from the sages, and fame among the ignorant, and that make themselves culpable for damage to themselves and others.

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[359] I.e. from cedars in general, not from the cedars of this place.

[360] The length of a *vara* is thirty-three British inches, or eight and thirty-six tenths decimeters.

I have just despatched an official communication to the chevalier governor of Bexar to notify him of a trail of ten or twelve men, which I saw at San Marcos, and which was seen again at Guadalupe – in my opinion, they are coming with evil intent – and to report to him the entrance of the Tancagues, so that if the first are Lipanes, their meeting may not have disastrous consequences. May God, etc. Salado, September 25, 1779.

I kiss the hand of your Lordship, etc.

ATANASIO DE MESIERES.

Señor Commandant-general.

228. LIST OF DE MEZIERES'S MEN
SEPTEMBER 27, 1779[381]

Positions and Names of the Militiamen of Natchito[c]hes who Accompanied Don Atanacio de Mesieres at the order of the Señor Governor of Luisiana, Don Bernardo de Galves

Lieutenant, Don Antonio Maria de Mesieres
Sub-lieutenant, Don Bernardo Dortolan
Sergeant, Nicolas Tournier
Sergeant of Bucarely, Juan Manuel Padilla
Corporal from Bucarely, Antonio le Noir.

Musketeers, from Bucarely

Francisco Hugue
Crisostomo Perault
Joseph Frichelle
Luis Monet
Nicolas Pent
Bartolo Mompierre
Julian Rondin
Andres Coupiere

Carried over 13

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[381] *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 288. It is plain that some of the names in this list are badly distorted, but the original document has not appeared and only the *Memorias* transcript is available.

Brought over 13

Pedro Renaudiere
Joseph Dupree
Remigio Totin
Mariano de Mony

Bartolo Rachat
Gaspar Tiol
Juan Bauptista Duc
Antonio Sant Benis

21

Domingo Sant Primo
Pedro Desvane

Luis Bertrant
Juan Bauptista Bernabane

4

25

It is to be noticed that to these musketeers, including the sergeant and corporal, there have been given in Nachitoches, by order of the Señor Governor Don Bernardo de Galves, and out of the royal chests [*caxas*] of New Orleans, nineteen pesos each, making a total of two hundred fifty pesos, which were given in order that they might secure supplies, munitions, and other things necessary for the journey. Bexar, Sept. 27, 1779.

ATANACIO DE MESIERES.

229. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, SEPTEMBER 30[?], 1779[262]

[NO. 12][263] SEÑOR COMMANDANT-GENERAL,

My dear Sir: Having been honored by a reply from Col. Don Domingo Cavello, I have this day arrived in his presence, and have shown him the passport from Señor Don Bernardo de Galvez, by virtue of which, and at your Lordship's order, I have come to this presidio to execute anything which may be intimated to me.

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[262] *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 288.

[263] The place of this *Document* in the series is not clear. It is plain that it is not the number 12 of the regular set, as is shown by the summary in no. 234. It appears to have been written immediately after De Mézières's arrival in San Antonio.

I cannot praise enough the attentions which I owe to this cavalier governor, and, although they are in keeping with his genial urbanity, breeding, and character, knowing the part which your Lordship's powerful influence has had in it, I tender my most fitting thanks, not forgetting the gratitude which is due the said gentleman, who, though obeying the orders of your Lordship, is known to have followed the impulses of his own inclination.

May God guard the important life of your Lordship many years. Bexar, Sept. 10 [30],[384] 1779.

I kiss the hand of your Lordship.

ATANACIO DE MESIERES.[384a]

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[384] The Manuscript, which, it will be remembered, is a copy, gives the date September 10, but this is impossible, for on that date De Mézières was at the Tuacana village. On September 27 he was in San Antonio, as is shown by *Document* 228. It is not improbable that the date should be September 30, as in the manuscripts of the date the 3 often greatly resembles the 1.

[384a] The story of De Mézières's expedition is summarized by Croix in *Document* 234.

X. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REFORMS IN THE PROVINCE OF TEXAS; THE DEATH OF DE MEZIERES, 1779

230. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, SEPTEMBER 30, 1779[865]

[No. 12] MY DEAR SIR: By your Lordship's letter dated the 18th of May last, I learn how pleased you would be if the disturbances of the Comanche should be stopped.

Having provided for this through the embassy which I sent in the latter part of last February to the person named Evea, principal chief and a great friend of mine, he replied, through the medal chief of the Nadacogs, whom I employed, that he is still firm in his promise, of which his allies and neighbors, the Indians of San Theodoro, may rest assured; that he admits that he was offended by the violence shown at Bucarely toward the people who were going there to meet and see me; but that as I had informed him that it was the result of a mistake he was satisfied; that those who were causing the damage were some bands which have separated themselves entirely from the main body of the nation; that they cannot be restrained; that already they have suffered a notable diminution; and that if their complete destruction should be effected—God grant it!—there would remain no ground for complaints unless cause should be given; and that he is oppressed.

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[865] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 66. Also in Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(a), f. 71; lacking from *Historia*, vol. 28. *Documents* 230-232 are here separated from the foregoing series, as relating to a different phase in the career of De Mézières.

The same thing is asserted by the Comancha Indian woman whom the Tuacanas recently sent to Bucarely, and of all this the commandant of this post is informed.

The same thing is attested by the very movements and acts of the hostile bands. The last time they appeared on the Brazos River, where they killed Mora, there were nine men; on the Trinity River, on my trial, five; at El Tuacana, when the Texas Indian died, one; and finally at San Marcos and Guadalupe, ten, who went to the fort of Santa Cruz and mortally wounded a citizen. No others have come to these parts for two years. But if the whole nation were hostile to us, would they not exert themselves to greater deeds? Would not their incursions, rapine, and assassinations be more frequent? Would they not be manifest to the Indians of San Theodoro? Could they be hidden from the merchants[366] who live there, less charged with their own interests than with vigilance for the royal service, the quietude of the province, and the welfare of the subjects?

Being already informed by these official communications of the present state of affairs, your Lordship will know of the hatred of the nations nearest to Bucarely, and especially of the Tuacanas, for the Comanches – a hatred which I have neither tried to placate entirely, nor to encourage too much, reserving [the opportunity] to avail myself of it as I may be ordered. Considering this and the kinship of the last Indians with the Tauviares, and their alliance with the Panis-mahas, it will not be difficult to engender a war without exerting ourselves more than to desire that it take place. But if wars should be declared, the forces of the allies will be dissipated in them, the winning of the Comanche, whenever it may be sought, will be frustrated, and greater boldness will result on the part of the Lipanes, with respect to whom I have exerted myself to have these Tuacanas maintain the defensive until they learn the superior determination of your Lordship.

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[366] This is evidence that the system of resident traders was in vogue among the Taovayas, for De Mézières evidently refers to traders at San Theodoro and San Bernardo, and not among the Comanche.

May God guard, etc., Bexar, September 30, 1779.

I kiss the hand of your Lordship, etc.

ATANASIO DE MESIERES.

Señor Commandant-general.

231. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, OCTOBER 7, 1779 [367]

[NO. 13] SEÑOR COMMANDANT-GENERAL,

My dear Sir: Your Lordship tells me, in your official communication of the eighteenth of last May, that the province of Texas is one of those which most merit your attention, and in truth, of all those in these Indies which enjoy the mild rule of our Catholic monarch, none appears worthy of more attention. The fertility and agreeableness of its lands have already been fully discussed. Let us now examine into its frontiers, extent, settlements, and temperature, and, after its advantages have been seen, let us notice the drawbacks which may appear in so important a province, as well as the promptness and efficacy with which the province itself will try to remedy them.

It is bounded on the east by Luisiana and the English colonies; on the west by Nueva Estremadura; on the south by the Gulf of Mexico; on the north by unknown regions.

Its width from the Bay of Espiritu Santo, which lies in latitude twenty-nine degrees north, to the village of

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[367] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 68. Also, *ibid.*, f. 115, where it appears as copy no. 2; Estados Unidos, 1777 leg. 3884(a), f. 76, where it appears as no 14; *ibid.*, no. 104, where it appears as copy no. 2; *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 261, where it appears as no. 14. That the correct number in the series is 13 is clear from *Document* 234.

San Theodoro of the Tauovayases, in thirty-five degrees north latitude, comprises more than two hundred leagues. The distance between Bexar and Natchitoches is the same; that towards the north-northwest is immense, having no terminus except the glacial zones.

Thus the vastness, as well as the climate, of the province is apparent. Such is the climate of those parts which have been settled and of those in their vicinity which invite settlement, that one does not experience in them either the extreme heat which debilitates the colonist, or the excessive cold which oppresses him who lives banished to regions near the poles. The sun dispenses with the greatest economy the soft influences which animate nature. Rarely does it permit the clouds to obscure its rays more than one whole day at a time. Between winter and summer days one does not notice the extremes so apparent in many places, where this celestial body, more or less liberal in its favors, appears to squander them in one season, and to dispense them sparingly in another. The serenity of the night matches that of the day. The dew is distilled to fructify the land, without making it necessary to guard against its malignity. Rarely are the frosts obstacles to travel. Dread of earthquakes or hurricanes, which appear to be the forerunners of universal ruin, never enters here. There is no need for alarm at the cruel epidemics which annually ravage with fury so many of the continental countries. Robust health, a valuable asset of the natives, brings them to extremest old age, without bearing them by the tedious stages of decrepitude which make existence odious.

The settlements are limited to Bexar,[388] which is called a villa, although it does not have the appearance of a fair-sized hamlet; the presidio of the Bahía del Espiritu Santo, which, without doubt, must have been founded for the important purpose of protecting the coast, but from which it is distant many leagues; finally, the defenseless town of Bucarely,[369] a worthy throne of poverty and unhappiness. What must be the cause of this, when one ought to find the greatest progress, considering the advantages which the country possesses, its irrigation facilities, products, salines, stock–and especially the large funds which royal generosity has assigned to this and other presidios, now extinguished, of the same province for half a century? I again ask, what is the cause of so little progress? The indolence of its inhabitants. And from what does this originate? From the lack of emulation. And this? From the lack of trade. O, what an abuse! Do you not have the sea so nearby? Is there not, in plain view, the spacious bay in which the founder of Luisiana, Don Roberto de la Salle, cast anchor with three ships, and whose settlement was butchered by the Carancaguases, who, up to the present time, continue in possession of that bay, and still commit their unpunished and scandalous misdeeds?

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[388] At San Antonio there were the villa of San Fernando de Béxar, the presidio of San Antonio de Béxar, and several missions.

Very well. But the increase of our stock has been so great that though there has been difficulty in selling and negligence in caring for them, we can secure those which we would devote to breeding and use from the Guadalupe, San Marcos, Las Animas,[370] Colorado, San Xavier, San Andres, and the Brazos, where they wander scattered about. Tell the truth, and without loss of time. Do you not see that these same advantages, being possessed by the treacherous Tancagues, have caused the idleness and vice of which you have complained? That the same is true with respect to the perfidious Apaches? To the thieving Comanches? To the guileful Carancahuas? And that it will be the same in regard to another enemy, really to be feared, whom you have as neighbor, and whom, on account of the hatred which he merits, I dislike even to name – in short, the Englishman, who, when he has made his alliance with those tribes, by means of gifts, promises, and deceit, without other supply of provisions than that which you may imagine, will dare to follow wherever his natural restlessness and greed lead him.

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[369] Nacogdoches. See *Document 214.*

[370] Brushy Creek, a branch of the San Gabriel, or the old San Xavier.

All the southern part of the province is coast. Who can give an account of it? Of the mouths of the rivers, the ports and bays, islands, and peninsulas, the number and the permanent residence of the execrable Carancaguases? Three centuries have passed since the conquest, and yet so many shipwrecks, such sad losses of life and property, and so many assassinations, have been insufficient to induce us to acquire it. Who will tell us of all of this? While some of the same English penetrate the country by land to effect their rapine and invasions, others may do likewise by sea to carry aid to the former, to relieve them of their spoils, to take charge of the prisoners, to supply new weapons, provisions, munitions, and men. Good! And who will guide them over unknown and dangerous seas? The experience which they have acquired beforehand. And if this should fail, the Carancaguases, with whom, without doubt, they will deal very soon, and whom, though their hands have been so many times bathed in our blood, we spare for greater offenses!

Is it credible that, notwithstanding the enormous distance, the Englishman will dare to come into places where, on account of the unavoidable noise of his march, he can never escape notice, and that he will not be prevented as a consequence, not only from advancing, but also from retreating? Of what forces will you avail yourself for this prowess? Will it be those from Bexar, who are always engaged in other duties? Will it be those from La Bahia, occupied in their own defense? Will it be the Indians of the missions, who are either hostile or indifferent? Will it be the unarmed militia of Bucarely? I repeat: the enemy is in sight of us, making his way between Cadodachos and Nachitoches. Within a month and a half he can confront us, by means of the secret and silent, provisioned, uninhabited country which will conceal him and make easy his passage. I grant that he may not come so soon with the implements of war; and that he will limit himself to winning the good will of the nations, to stealing that which the friendly ones have for us, to increasing in the hostile ones their hatred for us, to reconnoitering the roads, to informing himself of the advantages and difficulties. What fatal consequences will their pernicious thoughts not produce?

Hear and believe! In the midst of the most profound peace with England, her colonists made their way from the remote shores of the Northern Ocean [The Atlantic], nor did the roughness of the mountains, the impediments of the stormy lakes, the rapidity and the great number of the rivers, the density and immensity of the forests restrain their impetuosity and perfidy in stirring up to revolt the allied Indians included in the jurisdiction of Luisiana. In this enterprise they reached such a degree of atrocity that they established with the barbarians the nefarious and unheard of trade in the lives of the French. The price of each scalp was fixed at five pounds sterling, which was paid in guns, shot, powder, daggers, and weapons suitable for other uses.

Farms being deserted, the cultivation of the soil was neglected, and, although so many were the tragedies occasioned by this infamous traffic, the attacked were forced to establish one of the same kind. O, shame to my countrymen, shame to myself! We were commissioned for no other business than murder. The sole endeavor of the soldiers was to secure treason. All the plaudits and honors fell to him who made himself most famous by treachery. The Indians continually carried heads from one tribe to another. While the reward was being given them they considered what ones they should cut off next, and hastened to pile up outrages in order to obtain pardon and pay–detestable, yet necessary, reprisals, which forced Luisiana to the verge of complete loss and effected that of her honor.

But what purpose do these declamations serve, when the fact that the English are diverted in civil discord, drawing their swords upon each other, giving one another deep wounds, and directing their hands to avenging insults of which you complain, gives well-grounded hope that they will not be repeated? Oh, what an error! If the colonist remains our neighbor, what union, what harmony, will be experienced with one who with such fury attacked his own king, his own country? If the royalist, what efforts will he not put forth to fortify himself in the part of Luisiana which belongs to him, and to add to it as much as he can usurp, as a compensation for what he will have lost? Finally, if the two should become reconciled, leaving things as they were before, how much to be feared would their forces be for the one whom they might wish to injure! The citizen having already forgotten his holiday attire and the farmer his ploughshare, they think only of armor. Those who made a profession of liberal and mechanical arts now understand only that of war. All are soldiers. What do I say? All are corsairs. They think of nothing and will think of nothing but war, and, in order not to fall back into intestine strife, will interest themselves in foreign.

How just would be the anxieties of the vassal if they should not be removed by your Lordship, from whose benevolence and wisdom he expects, not slow remedies, but speedy prosperity? Deign to permit the exportation of meats, hides, lard, tallow, wool, flour, grain, mules, salt, and other goods peculiar to rural economy, in which this province abounds to so little profit. Deign, likewise, to facilitate the importation of whatever may be secured by sales in Tampico, Campeche, and Luisiana. Let the before-mentioned Bay of Espiritu Santo be used for this purpose. What competition will not result? What progress will not be made in agriculture and stockraising? What a multitude of strangers will not be drawn by the trade? How many will not remain, forgetful of fatherland, in view of the climate and advantage of these lands, and of the affability and protection of the chief who governs them? Cast your Lordship's benign eyes to another region. Contemplate one which is rough, difficult, and impassable, but which exists in order to stimulate those which are fertile and fruitful—that one which I entered in the year 1772. Then command El Cañon and Los Almagres[371] to deliver up at once their known treasures. Command the friendly nations, not excepting the Comanche, to assemble there to trade for our goods the meats and hides which they secure by hunting. Command them to protect the laborers, to drive away the Lipanes, and to guide us to other places where equal aid and benefit may be secured. Conceive and command whatever your Lordship may wish, and it will be carried out. Thus will our sovereign secure indemnity for so many expenses, past and present; the settler obtain the peace and comfort which he desires; each settlement, the people which it lacks; the whole province, the happy dawn of its creation; my chief, some of the numberless laurels which are reserved for him.

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[371] El Cañon was the cañon of the upper Nueces. Los Almagres was a mineral region near the lower Llano River which was opened up in 1756.

May God guard your Lordship many years. Bexar, Oct. 7, 1779.

The hand of your Lordship is kissed by your most faithful and humble servant. ATANASIO DE MESIERES.
Señor Commandant-general.

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232. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, OCTOBER 7, 1779[372]

[No. 14] SEÑOR COMMANDANT-GENERAL,

My dear Sir: Although the low, cowardly, and treacherous nation of the Carancahuases is so abominable in every way – their number does not exceed one hundred fifty men, as I am informed by the Orcoquisas, who have permitted their entrance and shown them friendship, and is even less, according to the testimony of trustworthy persons – yet we note with gratitude the compassion which your Lordship's generous breast shows for the infinite misfortunes which have been occasioned by their barbarity, and your determination and power to prevent in the future those which [otherwise] would undoubtedly be repeated. In view of this, and of the confidence that, notwithstanding my great uselessness, I receive from you, I humbly beseech your Lordship to pardon me if, in spite of the perfect knowledge which I have of your notorious perspicacity and your wise plans, I proceed to trouble your delicate attention with an account of some which, in my opinion, will have a quick and desirable result.

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[372] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 76. Also in Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(a), f. 73, where it appears as no. 13; *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 257, where it appears as no. 15. See *Document* 234.

The said Carancagues, always scattered, ever-wandering, make their residence either on the mainland, when the cold and frosts drive them from the islands to seek shelter and food in the woods, or in the islands as soon as they are attracted by the abundance of fish there, of which they are extremely fond, and which they enjoy during the greater and finer part of the year. By this it is seen that in order to obtain the desired result, resort must be had to both sea and land, ascertaining the means most efficient, not for a warning, because such should never be expected [to be effective] with such perfidious and indomitable people, but for the punishment, although so late, which their immemorial infamies merit.

It is evident that in this villa and the neighboring presidio of Bahia del Espiritu Santo, a sufficient number can be raised, among the soldiers, settlers, and mission Indians, to patrol the shore, when they may be notified, so that those pursued may have no chance to leave the islands. There, handed over to those who will likewise cross over in boats, they will be compelled to pay for their crimes, for, being shut within a small area of land, without thick forests to shelter their cowardly spirits, and most of them without any other weapon than the spear which they use for fishing, what will they do but go down upon their knees to implore that humanity which they have so outraged?

There is no suitable lumber here for boats, and if there were there would be lacking carpenters for their construction, skilled men to man them, sails, tackle, and other absolute necessities for navigation.

The city of New Orleans, which is abundantly supplied with everything needed in this particular, offers also the advantage that from it launches, equipped with every necessity, can be taken by the rivers to the village of the Atacapas, where they will find pilots from there to the mouth of the Trinity River, and, at a short distance, to Orcoquiza, an important site from which to despatch messengers to the Bay of Espiritu Santo, in order that troops may be furnished, and to give to the undertaking such a beginning as will assure it a successful conclusion.

The barges which are ordinarily used on the San Luis, or Mississippi, River have a capacity of six tons, with two swivel-guns in the prow, and are thus very suitable on account of their solidity, lightness, and defense. Their crews consist of sixteen rowers and the captain. Adding to this number eight others to alternate with them in the work, and chartering or buying three of these barges, it will be easy to transport seventy-five men, who should be chosen from among the Creoles and hunters, and who, with the aid of as many presidials, citizens, and Indians, are considered sufficient.

It is to be noted that in different visits which the Orcoquizas paid me, they constantly urged that the merchandise for their consumption, which is carried by land from Nachitoches, be sent to them by water, since thus the cost of transportation would be less and the expenditure more profitable. This has not been carried out, since the citizens of that jurisdiction have declined to undertake such importations, as they have appeared risky to them. Therefore, they [the Orcoquiza] will not be surprised, but rather they will be grateful on hearing that, for their welfare and in accord with their wishes, an expedition is being made by sea to establish a trading house in their neighborhood; the Carancahuases, in whose behalf they spoke to me with especial zeal, will owe the same benefit to their recommendation. Thus it is important to give them the appropriate notice, so that, as interested parties, they may come to learn the conditions of the trade which is to be established; as friends, to receive the gifts which are customarily given to those whom we esteem;[373] as experts, to indicate the place most suitable and to their liking both for the storing of goods and for the safe habitation of the people who will come to take care of and sell them, in view of the war with the English, which has lately arisen, and of the result which might arise from meeting them, thus putting into effect without delay that which up to the present has been tried in vain, through lack in the traders of the vigor and resolution, which, being manifested today, ought to be taken advantage of.

The Orcoquizas, learning of these motives, and stimulated by the gift which will be made to them, so much the sooner will assemble and persuade a great number of the Carancahuazes (who have approached the village of the former from the fear in which they live of your Lordship's just anger), since they will not have the least suspicion that punishment will be inflicted upon them by that route.

When the assemblage has been effected, the commandant will take all possible precautions not to leave alive any of those who have committed so many murders, in case they should wish to defend themselves. Continuing, then, and examining with every care the islands and mainland, to join the land forces, he will destroy every band he may find, penetrating as far as the presidio of Bahia, not only in order to leave no doubt as to the complete success of the expedition, but also to secure perfect knowledge of the coast, of the mouth of the

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[373] This treacherous policy is in keeping with that which he followed with respect to El Mocho. See *Document* 222.

San Antonio River, and of the exterior and interior of the said bay, in case it should be utilized for the important object which I have set forth in number 13, preceding.

May God forbid that I, by assuming the ferocity which appears with such a horrid aspect in the Carancahuazes, should seem an unworthy subject of the Catholic Majesty, by suggesting with little respect for its holy laws the culpable arbitrament of passing through fire and blood those who might give themselves up voluntarily. On the contrary, let the women be spared, out of consideration for their sex; the infants, for their innocence; the youths, in order to make them hate, by means of breeding and Christian teaching, the crimes of their ancestors; the adults, in order that they may not again perpetrate them. Giving them the treatment which is proper among civilized nations, let them be sent to lands where they may lose the thought of returning to their perverse customs; where they may serve God if they wish, and the state whether they wish it or not; and where by personal service they may compensate somewhat for the expense which will have been caused by their reduction; finally, let justice be satisfied by inflicting exemplary punishment upon the famous Joseph Maria,[374] if it is possible to administer it in proportion to his atrocious deeds.

Let the glorious avenging of the injuries which our nation has received from one so odious, abominable, and hateful, be reserved for my chief. Let Luisiana owe to him the avenging of the disastrous end of the Cavalier de la Salle, her founder! Let so many youths, the most brilliant of New Orleans, who returning from Vera Cruz experienced the same fate, owe theirs to him! Let the Engineer Don Luis Andri, with numberless persons now buried in the forgetfulness of time, owe theirs to him. O, sad event! O, deplorable adventure, in which a sad father saw assassinated his beloved son whom he clasped in his pious arms; in which a tender and helpless child saw the paternal breast, to which he was clinging, laid open by dagger thrusts. Most unhappy beings! What did you not suffer with the terrible anguish of death and of love? You united the tears which were shed by your eyes with the blood which burst forth from your wounds; you breathed forth your sighs, and lost more than life.

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[374] Evidently one of the Karankawa leaders.

May God guard your Lordship, etc. Bexar, October 7, 1779.

I kiss your Lordship's hand, etc.

ATANASIO DE MESIERES.

Señor Commandant-general.

[Endorsement[374a]] I certify that the above are copies of the originals in the Secretariat of the Commandancy-general in my charge. Arispe, May 23, 1780.

ANTONIO BONILLA.

233. CROIX[375] TO JOSE DE GALVEZ, MAY 23, 1780[376]

The Commandant-general of the Interior Provinces of New Spain transmits a summary and copies of letters of Athanasio Demecieres relative to his last visit to the allied nations

NO. 521. MOST EXCELLENT SIR,

My dear Sir: Pursuant to the notices which I communicated to your Excellency in letter number 266 of September 23, 1778,[377] and with the objects which I explained to your Excellency in reserved letter number 4 of March 29, 1779, I requested of the governor of Luisiana, Don Bernardo de Galvez, that he permit the commander of the post of Nachitoches, Don Atanasio Demesieres, to transfer himself to the presidio of San Antonio de Bejar.

[374a] The endorsement applies to the series of fourteen letters.

[375] For the sake of bringing together the fourteen despatches of De Mézières and the summary of them by Croix, the chronological order has been violated here.

[376] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 37. Also Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(a), f. 49.

As soon as this officer secured his chief's permission, he told him of his plan of going by way of the pueblos of the friendly nations for the purpose of assembling them, composing their dissensions, securing their friendship, and inclining and attracting them to the projects agreed upon in the councils of war.

Having approved the plans of Demecieres, the governor of Luisiana considered it wise to send him some goods as present for the Indians, according to the custom. With these supplies and an escort of twenty-seven militiamen that officer set out from Nachitoches on May 24, 1779, as is shown by accompanying copy number 1.[378]

With this letter Demecieres begins to relate the occurrences of his journey to San Antonio de Bejar, these notices being continued in the twelve letters, copies of which I also transmit herewith, together with a summary of them all.

In the first eleven he gives a clear and pleasing dissertation upon the country and its inhabitants; in numbers 3 and 4 he relates the events which took place in the new pueblo of Pilar de Bucarely, the causes of its abandonment, and the migration of the inhabitants to the old and extinguished mission of Nacodoches (concerning which grave matter I await the latest news from and proposals of the governor of Texas in order to report to your Excellency); and in number 9 he recounts the harangue which he made to the friendly Indian tribes, the applause and pleasure with which they received it, and the presents which he gave them.

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[377] The reference is to *Document* 187.

[378] The reference is to *Document* 210.

Copy number 12 manifests the prudent maxims of which he made use to calm the unrest of the Comanches, and to avail himself of the friendship of the other northern Indians, whose aid and coöperation against the Apaches Lipanes he proffers.

In copy number 13 he sets forth the means for chastizing the treacherous and bloodthirsty Carancaguaces of the coast; and if Luisiana could actually aid in them, I am persuaded that they would produce the results which he predicts.

And finally, in number 14 he sets forth the state of the province of Texas, the fears caused him by the nearness of foreign colonies, and the means to be employed to dispel these fears.

All of the reports of the deceased Lieutenant-colonel Don Atanacio Demesieres attest his zeal, and also show the necessity of carrying into effect the greater part of his proposals; for I consider them pertinent to the common welfare of the provinces in my charge, because, just as the Apache is the common enemy who hostilizes them all, their certain castigation depends upon our alliance with the Nations of the North, whose aid would soon rid us of the Lipanes, the right arm of that nation [the Apache].

And, notwithstanding the fact that I have given, your Excellency, my opinion on these matters since I am especially indebted to the last reports and the noble labors of the deceased Lieutenant-colonel Demecieres, I transmit the reports to your Excellency that you may deign to make them known to his Majesty.

May our Lord preserve your Excellency many years. Arispe, May 23, 1780.

Most excellent Sir, your Excellency's hand is kissed by your most attentive and faithful servant,

El Cavallero de Croix [rubric].

Most excellent Señor Don Joseph de Galvez.

234. CROIX TO JOSE DE GALVEZ, MAY 23, 1780[378a]

Summary of the notices and proposals contained in fourteen letters[379] *written to this government by the deceased Lieutenant-colonel Don Atanacio de Mesieres during the last journey which he made from Natchitoches, of the province of Luisiana, to San Antonio de Bejar, in the province of Texas, and after his arrival at the latter place, whither he went, in virtue of my despatches, to carry into effect the measures agreed upon in the councils of war which I held in Chihuagua, June 16, and of which I gave a report to his Majesty in letter no. —*[380]

[Letter No. 1] The orders communicated to this officer to the effect that he should transfer himself to Bejar bear the date of September 10, 1778; but he was unable to leave Natchitoches until May 24, 1779, on account of the continual freshets of the rivers which intervened and impeded his march. Before beginning it he informed the governor of Luisiana that he was thinking of going by way of the friendly pueblos of the Tuacanas, and of having assembled there beforehand the Tancagües, a poor and vagabond people, in order to encourage them to abandon their miserable life and try to live one more comfortable and social; and that at the same time he would demand the delivery of the apostates who had taken refuge among them, adding to this motive that of settling certain disputes and dissensions.

[378a] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 83. Also in Estados Unidos, 1777, leg. 3884(a), f. 83.

[379] This summary is the best guide to the correct numbering of the despatches, which order has become confused by the copies in the *Memorias*.

[380] The number is lacking in the original.

These ideas received the appreciation which they deserved from General Don Bernardo de Galvez who approved them and sent some goods to him, that he might present them to the Tuacanas and Tancagües, as is the custom when one goes to treat of matters of importance. With these provisions and an escort of twenty-seven men, Demesieres began his march, journeying the first day as far as Los Adaes.

This place is the one in which was situated the old presidio of the same name. Its land lacks advantages for irrigation, but is fertile and plentifully supplied with water, pasturage, timber, limestone, and salines; but these great advantages never could free the troops and citizens of their inexpressible poverty, which arose from greater abuses.

[LETTER NO. 2] At a distance of thirteen leagues from Los Adaes and twenty from Natchitoches the Sabinas River flows south-southwest through plains and woods inhabited by all kinds of animals. It rises forty leagues from there in the village of San Teodoro, and terminates in the Gulf of Mexico near the port of Opelousas, of the jurisdiction of Luisiana, watering in all this distance more than two hundred leagues of country. It is not navigable on account of its small volume of water and its frequent and dangerous falls; but in the neighborhood of its mouth canoes and small boats can navigate. It experiences periodical freshets in the winter and spring which flood more than three leagues on each side, causing great difficulties. A short distance from its bank is found the small village of the Ais, for whom was founded the mission of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores, although in vain, for much labor and wealth were spent on these indolent people without making any converts. Their number is twenty families, whose territory is among the richest of the province of Texas.

[LETTER NO. 3] Scarcely had Demesieres set out from his camp of Sabinas in continuation of his march, when he received a letter from the captain of militia, Don Antonio Gil Ybarbo, informing him that some Spaniards of his jurisdiction and of Natchitoches who were going to Bejar had just been attacked near the Brazos River by Indians whom he presumed to be Tancagües, the attack resulting in the death of one of our people named Mora, and in the serious wounding of another; that it was necessary for him to pursue the aggressors with the few men that he had, the rest being occupied on the Colorado River; that meanwhile unless Demesieres should go quickly, as he had requested, to its aid, his pueblo would remain exposed to insults, there being in it only old men, women, and children. This painful news, which caused suspicion of the fidelity of the Tancagües, obliged Don Atanacio Demesieres to hasten his march; but he had the misfortune to suffer a dangerous accident from a heavy fall. He had himself carried, nevertheless, to the Atoyaque River, where he remained five days. Seeing that his illness increased during this time, and being persuaded by the entreaties of his servant, he permitted himself to be carried on a stretcher to his home, where he was two months recovering. But before leaving Atoyaque he had the forethought to leave there the troops in his escort to await his return (which was on the 25th of August) with the prudent desire not to wear his horses out, and in order that the nations who expected him, seeing his camp fixed, should not become afraid that he had deceived them with false reports.

The Atoyaque River flows fifteen leagues from that of Sabinas, ten from Nacodoches, thirty from its source, and an almost equal distance from the Angelinas River, which is farther up. Its bottom is of stone; it abounds in fish; and its banks are covered with very high cedars, which furnish the best of timber for building and are the haunts of much wild game.

[LETTER NO. 4] From the old and ruinous mission of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, uselessly established for the instruction of the Nacogdoche, Texas, and Navedachos Indians, he reports the quality of the country, which the citizens of the pueblo of Bucareli must recently have selected for their location. At the foot of a hill where stand the buildings, flows a large volumed arroyo, whose waters cannot be utilized for the irrigation of the lands, because they are very high, and consequently sterile during the seasons when they are not watered by the rains. This has been the experience of the people from Bucareli, who, having lost their labor and their seed grain, go about dispersed among the heathen, carrying their meager goods and exchanging their clothing for food and hunger for nakedness.

The Trinity River, where formerly they were established, lacked these inconveniences, the reason alleged for having abandoned it not being well founded. The overflow of the river never would have ruined their houses nor carried off their stock if they had constructed them in a better location and established the haunts of the stock in some other and less exposed place, which the same country afforded. And with respect to their fear of new attacks of the Comanches, this should have been dispelled by the report that three of these had been killed in the last encounter, and that the Tuacanas had aided in their punishment, following them in their flight, recovering Mora's scalp, avenging his death and that of two of their people, and capturing one of their women, who, of their own accord they sent to Bucarely. This deed, proof of the faithful friendship of these Indians, was of such merit that Demesieres kept it in mind for the purpose of thanking them.

The migration of the families from Bucarely caused much terror among the neighboring tribes. The Vidais, exposed to the rigors of the frontier, must have retired to the coast, and the Texas and Navedachos will not delay long in doing so for the same reason; for this reason Demesieres was of the opinion that these families should return and settle in the same place which they deserted, being reinforced by the others from Los Adaes who are at Bejar and encouraged by some aid given to the militiamen whenever they are on duty. The advantageous location of this country, which would afford them the advantages of trade with New Orleans, and to the royal service those which Demecieres set forth on March 18, 1778, in letter number 1, should make it preferable to any other.

[Letter No. 5] Eight leagues above Nacogdoches is found the Angelinas River, and eight leagues farther, the Nechas River, neither of which yields to the Sabinas in the strength of its floods. They bathe rich lands. The first crosses the territory of the Texas, and on the banks of the second, which runs near the Navedachos, is seen a mound formed by the ancestors of this nation, for the purpose of erecting on its top some temple or other. The pueblo nearby was overlooked by this monument, which is rather evidence of the multitude than of the industry of the individuals who were employed in its erection.

The Angelinas River has its origin two days above the ford, and the same distance down stream it joins the Nechas; united thus, they run to the sea, where they form an easy entry for vessels.

The Texas comprise eighty men, and the Navedachos half as many. These two groups maintain the firmest friendship with the Spaniards. Their most influential chiefs having died during the last epidemic, they requested Demesieres to choose others, but he excused himself by saying that his rank and authority would not permit it, this being a prerogative of the governor of the province in whose jurisdiction they were established.

[LETTER NO. 6] Leaving Navedachos, he departed from the highway, turning to the right, in order to go more directly to the Tuacanas. For a space of fifteen leagues he crossed hills and valleys abounding in grapevines laden with grapes of excellent quality, and arrived at the pueblo of the Quitseis. Continuing from this place by the same route as that which he followed the year before, he excuses himself from describing the country, confining himself to the incidents which occurred.

[LETTER NO. 7] Two leagues before arriving at the first village of the Tuacanas he met a large party of Tancagües who were awaiting him there. They told him that on account of the death of their principal chief they had chosen another Indian known by the nickname of Mocho [the maimed].

This person, of the Apache tribe, captured by the Tancagües and afterward made a chief because of his valor, is a bitter enemy of the Spaniards, which fact caused the Baron de Ripperdá, formerly governor of

Texas, to charge Demesieres to try to contrive means of killing him, which would have been accomplished if it had not been for the death of those who were to carry out the order.

This circumstance in his favor obliged Demesieres to treat him with affability and with demonstrations of the greatest affection and the highest consideration. When he was certain of his gratitude he exhorted him to gather all of his people in pueblos and that they should live on good terms with the Tuacanas. These proposals, supported by the force and solidity of the discourse, produced in the heart of this chief the desired effect. He said that he had already determined to act on this plan at the invitation of the governor of Texas; that he would go to Bejar whither he was called by this chief, and that on his return he would settle in the beautiful Parage de la Tortuga. All this he promised to execute, with expressions so emphatic and oft repeated that Demesieres did not doubt the seriousness of his promises, and congratulated himself that he should succeed in bringing about the union of the Tancagües and their friendship with the Tuacanas through the act of the very person whom he had thought would oppose it with all his power. Here there were presented to him some fugitive Indians from the missions of Bejar, whom he succeeded in inducing to go with him voluntarily.

[Letter No. 8] The rejoicing and profuseness which the Tuacanas manifested in the reception which they gave to this officer was quite in keeping with their proved loyalty. He told their chief of the friendliness and the good disposition which Mocho had shown, which gave him great pleasure, and the latter having presented himself, they embraced and repeated mutual promises of the greatest harmony. The news of this, promulgated by the public crier of the village, caused great rejoicing, the day being passed in banquets and dancing.

They reported to him that the Panismahas and the Indians of San Teodoro had been there to see him; but that after waiting for him a month and a half they had retired, thinking that he had not yet recovered his health, the bad state of which they had learned.

He learned also that four of the Xaranames restored to the Mission of Espíritu Santo the year before had again fled and up to two days before his arrival had been kept as guests in the house of the Tuacana chief, from which they had gone with permission to absent themselves for only one day but had not returned.

After the epidemic the Tuacanas were reduced to the number of two hundred fifty, and the Tancagües to a hundred less. The people of San Teodoro and Panismahas suffered less diminution, and the Comanches none.

[LETTER NO. 9] All the Tuaçanas and Tancagües being assembled, Demesieres made them a harangue, telling them that the commandant-general of these provinces expected, from their accredited loyalty, that they would remain permanently united and harmonious both with the Spaniards and with the neighboring nations; that what he especially desired was the settlement of the Tancagües, in order to dispel all suspicion of their actions; that they should endeavor to impress the Comanche with peaceful thoughts; and that in case this just request should be denied, recourse would be had to other means; but that meanwhile they should keep their hatchets raised, not to offend but to defend themselves, until they should learn the superior decision. They applauded and unanimously responded that they would comply with everything; for their promises, loyalty, and warm reception he thanked them, and after he had distributed a moderate supply of presents they separated with mutual satisfaction.

[LETTER NO. 10] Being supplied with what was necessary for the continuation of his march, he set out from the village of the Tuacanas, going south-southwest fifty leagues through superior lands bathed by the San Andrés River and seven others of less importance. He was accompanied by chief Mocho and other Indians, to the number of seventy-five persons in all. The caution with which these Indians journey, their freedom to follow or desert their chief, their dexterity in procuring food, and other advantageous circumstances which they enjoy, inspired the relation which Demesieres gives in this letter. When he wrote he was at the San Xavier River, in whose waters thrive an abundance of trout, carp, eel, and other fish. It is capable of supplying irrigation or of running mills; its banks abound in horses and cattle; there are advantages for raising sheep, goats, and hogs. These and many other qualities, which are set forth in detail in the letter, make this place worthy of the closest attention with a view to erecting pueblos situated advantageously for commerce with the nations nearby and for communication with Luisiana. This river rises in the range of hills which runs from the country of the Tuacanas to the presidio of San Sabas. In its course it is joined by the Brazos, among others, and flows, according to report, into the sea.

[LETTER NO. 11] At a distance of ten leagues is the Colorado; at an equal distance from this is the Guadalupe, and then follow eight others to the Arroyo del Salado, close to Bejar. The lands are of the same superior quality as the foregoing. The Colorado and

Brazos Rivers rise above San Sabas and run parallel with the Sabinas; the first, which is very rapid, loses itself in lakes, and near its ford is a hill called Loma de Hierro [Iron Hill] because it contains an abundance of this metal, with the necessary advantages for working it.

The San Marcos River rises in a large channel of water which springs from a great rock, in the neighborhood of which are wonderful crystallizations which represent various figures.

On the banks of the Guadalupe River, which is not inferior to the San Marcos, there are found in abundance tall cedars and cypresses; it is joined by the Arroyo del Cibolo and the Arcon (where there is a large cave with curious incrustations), and flows into the Bahía del Espíritu Santo.

From the Salado this officer reported his arrival and that of the Tancagües to the governor, Don Domingo Cavello, to the end that endeavor be made to prevent them from meeting the Lipanes.

[LETTER NO. 12] Arrived at Bejar he manifests the good disposition of Captain Evea, principal chief of the Comanches, and his promise to keep his people quiet; the hatred which the Nations of the North have for them, and especially the Tuacanas, ready all to take arms against them, and finally, his reflections concerning this important matter while awaiting the last decisions.

[LETTER NO. 13] In number 13 he sets forth the excellent circumstances of the province of Texas, and its admirable advantages for its increase and commerce. He represents it as being both the best fitted to be rich and the most exposed by reason of its abandoned state. He describes the state of its settlements, and with sound reasoning demonstrates what it might be; he supports his assertions with his great knowledge of its lands, waters, forests, and the other natural resources which it embraces, for making its settlements respectable and commercial, capable of withstanding the proximity of the English.

[LETTER NO. 14] The Carancaguez nation, which lives now on the mainland and again on the nearby islands, deserves to be exterminated because of its cruelties. This consideration, in view of such inhuman deeds as it has committed, moved Demesieres to propose it in letter number 14, in which, relating some of their atrocities, he indicates means for avenging them through their total destruction. Arispe, May 23, 1780.

EL CAVALLERO DE CROIX [rubric].

235. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX,[381] OCTOBER 7, 1779[382]

[NO. 16] MY DEAR SIR: I enclose for your Lordship a package of letters which was entrusted to me by my chief, Señor Don Bernardo de Galves, for your Lordship, to whom I cannot refrain from presenting a copy of three letters which the same gentleman also sent.

> FIRST. The king has learned of the expedition made by the Lieutenant Colonel Don Atanacio de Mesieres, in which he visited the villages of the friendly Indians situated to the north of Chiguagua, through the letters which this official has written to the Commandant-general of the Interior Provinces, Don Teodoro de Croix. His Majesty has learned from them of the prudence and good judgment of Mesieres, and of the skill with which he has performed his commission. In consequence, he has determined that he shall be given thanks, and I give them in the accompanying letter, which your Lordship will address to him. For his Majesty wishes that he receive it from your hand, and that your Lordship may report the length of service of Mesieres as lieutenant-colonel, and whether you consider him

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[381] The first two letters quoted are printed as *Documents*, 194 and 195.

[382] *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 289.

worthy of the rank of colonel. May God guard your Lordship. Pardo, March 6, 1779. JOSE GALVÉZ.
Señor Don Bernardo de Galvez.

SECOND. By means of the notices which have been communicated to me by the Commandant of the Interior Provinces, Don Theodoro de Croix, with the copies of the sixteen letters which you have sent him from the villages which you have examined in your visit to the friendly tribes north of Chiguagua, I have made known to the king the important service which you have performed, and his Majesty has regarded it with much complacency and gratitude, commanding me to give you, in his royal name, due thanks. This I do with the greatest pleasure, assuring you that his Majesty will keep in mind your merits and services. May God guard, etc. Pardo March 6, 1779. JOSE DE GALVES.
Señor Don Atanacio de Mesieres.

THIRD. MOST EXCELLENT SIR — MY DEAR SIR: By a royal order of the sixth of last March, I note what your Excellency is pleased to tell me concerning the Lieutenant-colonel Don Atanacio de Mesieres, to whom I will send in due time the letter which your Lordship encloses to me for this official. Complying with that which I am required to do by the said royal order, I must inform your Excellency that the said Mesieres was appointed lieutenant-colonel in the year of 1773, and that his skillful services, his application and love, and the care with which he has performed and performs the commissions, of the highest importance, which have been intrusted and are intrusted to his well known zeal, make him, in my opinion, deserving of the rank of colonel. This is as much as I can and should report to your Excellency in fulfillment of my obligation. [I send it] in order that you may be pleased to bring it to the sovereign understanding of his Majesty. May God guard, etc. New Orleans, July 3, 1779. BERNARDO DE GALVES.
Señor Don Joseph de Galves.

I confess that I am no less confused at sight of such honor than I am lacking in the expressions by which I should like to manifest the eternal gratitude which I owe to the benignity of your Lordship, to whom I am indebted for such a signal honor. I hope that this will prove my zeal and my desire to make myself worthy of the enviable protection of your Lordship. May God, etc. Bexar, Oct. 7, 1779. ATANACIO DE MESIERES.

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236. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, OCTOBER 7, 1779[383]

[No. 18] SEÑOR COMMANDANT-GENERAL,

My dear Sir. Since the cultivation of the acquaintance of the friendly tribes is one of the most important matters, with respect to the prosperity of this province, and since this requires the acquisition of individuals who understand them, who can talk to them, and who can repeat faithfully what may be said on one side and the other, I have resolved to detain here, not only the said Andres Curviere, a soldier from the urban militia of Nachitotes [*sic*], because he is skilled in the language of the Tancagues, the Taucanas, and the Indians of San Teodoro, but also the beforementioned Francisco Uque and Julian Rondin, because they are equally versed, one of them in the language of the Aiiaes, or Panis-Mahas, and the other in that of the Cadodachos and Texas. All three have another especial accomplishment, that of understanding Spanish, while the said Curviere has the additional one of knowing how to read and write. With this advantage, the interpreters will never reveal secrets intrusted to them, upon which, in many instances, success depends. And whenever it is necessary to send news a long distance, the three can reconnoiter the country with a moderate escort, not excepting the Comanche country, since they are known and loved in every part. Thus I shall await the superior determination of your Lordship, as to whether they shall return to their native jurisdiction or shall remain here incorporated in the light squadron, performing the same services and enjoying the same pay, which I consider suitable to their talent and to the tasks to which they may devote their energies.

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[383] *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 266.

May God guard, etc. Bexar, October 7, 1779.

ATANACIO DE MESIERES.

237. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, OCTOBER 13, 1779[384]

SEÑOR COMMANDANT-GENERAL—MY DEAR SIR: Since the chevalier governor of this province has informed me of the new office which, through the piety of the king and the powerful influence of your Lordship, is assigned to him, and that the one which he serves with such diligence falls to me,[385] I must state that your affliction, when you observe the notable loss of an officer in whom are united the qualities most adaptable to the critical circumstances of this government, will be equal to the confusion that will be experienced in his painful substitution by the one who, with no qualifications, succeeds him.

The just mistrust from which I take my position comes: *first*, from my inexperience in matters of law; from not having persons with whom to consult; and from my fear that there may arise, as a result, quarrels and suits (in whose decision I shall use only common sense, which has no value among the cavilous) that will tire out the superior court.

Second, from the critical situation in which I shall be placed in regard to the Lipanes and the Nations of the North. It will be necessary for me to treat the former with a certain sort of friendship. At this the latter will take offense, for, on account of their frequent appearance, it cannot be hidden from them, nor, since I have fomented and applauded their hatred up to the present time, can excuses be given which will satisfy them. This presidio must be looked upon as the most advantageous and fitting place for the Nations of the North to assemble in for their campaigns. From this will follow either the immeasurable wrath of the said [Lipanes], at the successes of the others, or a diminution of these successes if they should notice slight inclination to furnish them the information or the aid which they will need for their accomplishment.

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[384] *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 267.

[385] This is the only direct evidence I have seen of De Mézières's appointment as governor.

Third. Likewise, let due consideration be given to the exorbitant cost for provisions which will be occasioned by such great and frequent assemblies of people; and if they should become scarce from the results of their reception by individuals, what will they try with the present chief? What they would never think of doing with a distinguished or neutral one.

Fourth. Consider also the state of my health, which has been very feeble since the accident to which I made reference in number 3,[386] and which leaves me unfit for any violent exercise, such as that occasioned by riding, journeys, and marches.

It seems to me that if I should leave this matter in silence, it would be a flagrant abuse of your Lordship's confidence, since it is not the office which should honor, but which should be honored, and since the most serious duty of the employé is to strive for the pleasure of the patron who secured his appointment.

Moreover, since Lusiana is already, or soon will be, a famous theatre of war, I shall see with grief that I am prevented from continuing my feeble efforts in it; on account of my knowledge of the places by which the enemy tries to enter the important post of Nachitoches, and of the way to impede his passage, as well as on account of my knowledge of the language, number, location, customs, government, and disposition of the Indians; of the management of their temperaments; of preventing disturbances with ease; and even of making use of their forces, in case I should be ordered to send your Lordship prompt and timely information and to look after the welfare, not only of my jurisdiction, but also that of this province. Let it not be thought that I wish to boast. For of what could I boast, when these unprofitable talents (if, perchance, I possess any) are the result of long experience, and would appear, without doubt, more brilliant in another who might have consumed less time in their acquisition? Nevertheless, if your Lordship determines that I shall remain, I can only undertake the duties with all resoluteness, and if I fail it will be for lack of vigor, not of zeal. In this connection, I have the honor to notify you that my family is in Nachitoches, and that it is necessary for me to bring them here under my protection. This makes necessary an escort sufficient to go and bring them safely into my presence, and I await your decision in order to adopt the means most conducive to so desirable an end.

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[386] The reference is to *Document* 213.

My two oldest sons have been my companions in the past tasks, and one is with me even in this one. The oldest is captain; the next in age is lieutenant of the company of militia cavalry which was organized by order of Señor Don Bernardo Galves, and who are serving until it is convenient for his Excellency to station them in the Second Lusiana Battalion, which ought to be formed. Of the other two sons, the one fourteen years of age is a cadet, as his brothers were; and the youngest, twelve years old, may now be appointed one. I have petitioned my chief, and have received his permission, so that at the first news they may accompany me to my destination, provided I remain under the honorable command of your Lordship, whose enviable protection I invoke in behalf of those mentioned; for neither will my limited faculties consent to such separation, nor will my mode of thinking permit us to live united and yet idle.

And since there is a vacancy in the position of standard-bearer of this company, to which your Lordship appointed the deceased Don Antonio Tremiño, I entreat you to deign to bestow it upon my second son, Antonio María;[387] that you make the oldest commander of troops or of the militia of the province, when their formation is effected; that you let the little ones serve as volunteers if cadets are not customary here; that you grant to their father the favor of not thinking him indiscreet; because if one should appeal to chiefs for what they can bestow, it is not inconsiderate in the candidate to claim what he is entitled to by his services, honor, and birth.

May God guard, etc. Bexar, Oct. 13, 1779.

ATANACIO DE MESIERES.

238. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX, OCTOBER 18, 1779[388]

SEÑOR COMMANDANT-GENERAL — MY DEAR SIR: In view of the return of the seven militiamen, who, with soldiers and citizens of this presidio, set out for the Colorado River to accompany the Tancagues, who were returning to their lands (which precaution was taken by the chevalier governor, in view of the threats made by the Lipanes, who were staying in this vicinity, watching them and intending to attack them on their way out), I am going to have my men return to Nachitoches, retaining the three persons whom I mentioned in number

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[387] This son, Antonio, was later serving as alférez at La Bahia.

[388] *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 269.

18, until I learn of your Lordship's superior resolution.

May God guard your important life many years. Bexar, October 18, 1779.

The hand of your Lordship is kissed by your most faithful and humble servant ATANACIO DE MESIERES.

239. DE MEZIERES TO CABELLO, OCTOBER 26, 1779 [389]

Official communication of the Lieutenant-colonel Don Atanasio Demecieres to the Governor of Texas

MY DEAR SIR: Finding it indispensable that the detachment of militia which has escorted me to this presidio, at the order of the Señor Governor of the province of Luisiana, should return to their post at Nachitoches, I would be grateful to your Lordship if you would deign to issue a passport for the sub-lieutenant, Don Bernardo Dortolant, two corporals, and nineteen soldiers (not including in that number the lieutenant, who came with said picket, or my son, who has remained with me), the sergeant, and the three soldiers who, as I have suggested to your Lordship, can serve as interpreters. With these the whole picket consisted of twenty-seven men, who are those who set out under my orders from the villa of Nachitoches. It is also necessary for me to inform your Lordship that I need four hundred fifty pesos to aid the troop which is to set out, and provide them with the supplies needed for their maintenance during the long journey which they have to make from this presidio to the villa of Nachitoches, and without which aid their return is impracticable. I am ready to give your Lordship the corresponding receipt for your protection whilst I report to the Señor Commandant-general of these Interior Provinces that your Lordship has furnished the stated quantity for the purposes which

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[389] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 100.

I have expressed, being persuaded that he will approve this action, since it redounds to the service of his Majesty.

May God preserve your Lordship many years. Royal Presidio of San Antonio de Bejar, October 26, 1779.

The hand of your Lordship is kissed by your most humble and faithful servant. ATANASIO DEMECIERES. Señor Governor Don Domingo Cavello.

240. DE MEZIERES TO MATIAS DE GALVEZ [390] OCTOBER 28, 1779 [391]

St. Antoine, Oct. 28, 1779.

I am only awaiting to die and my ills cause me to desire it. I commend my children to you; may you be their benefactor, as you have been mine. Deign to permit them to participate in the military pension. My family is left in poverty. My last journeys have occasioned all my debts and the malady to which I succumb. May you live happily, dear and worthy chief. My last farewell has no other wish than your happiness. I die as I have lived. Your very humble and obedient servant. DE MEZIERES.

241. DE MEZIERES TO CROIX [UNDATED] [392]

MY GENERAL: I can write you only very little, and that very badly and in my own language. I humbly commend my children to your Lordship, in order that it may please you to support them before his Excellency, the Minister of the Indies. I entreat you also to make my two daughters participants of the Monte Pío.[393] They are in want, and I leave them only debts which my journeys of last year and this have compelled me to contract. I die confident of your Lordship's protection of my family. This is my consolation.

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[390] Matias de Galvez, forty-eighth viceroy of New Spain, was a brother of José de Galvez. In 1783, after having served as governor and captain-general of Guatemala, he was promoted to the vice-royalty of New Spain. He died the next year. In recognition of the services he had rendered, the king decreed that no *residencia* should be held [Bancroft, *Mexico*, vol. iii, 385-388].

[391] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 192, no. 166.

[392] *Historia*, vol. 28, f. 291, in French. Also *ibid.*, in Spanish translation.

My General, your very humble and obedient servant.

DE MESIERES.

Monsieur the Commandant-general.

242. DECREE OF GOVERNOR CABELLO OCTOBER 28, 1779[394]

Royal Presidio of San Antonio de Bejar,
October 28, 1779.

In consequence of what the Lieutenant-colonel Don Atanasio Demecieres sets forth in his foregoing official communication, and notwithstanding the fact that I have no orders from the Señor Commandant-general to bear this expense, nor funds from which to supply it, but considering the loss which this troop might suffer by the delay of their return to their post, and [trusting] that the Señor Commandant-general will deign to approve the provision for their aid, indicating the branch [of the revenue] from which this item is to be replaced, the Lieutenant Don Bernardo Fernandez, agent of the company of cavalry of this royal presidio, will deliver from any of the departments of which he has charge

Dom Cabello

[Facsimile of the signature of Domingo Cabello, governor of Texas. From the original in the Bexar Archives]

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[393] The Monte Pio Militar was a fund set aside by the government for the support of widows and orphans of soldiers.

[394] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 100.

the four hundred fifty pesos to the Lieutenant-colonel Don Atanasio Demecieres, in order that he may expend them for the purposes which he sets forth in the foregoing official communication, the said lieutenant-colonel giving a receipt here-below for the amount stated. And let a legal copy authenticated by me be made, to be sent in the next mail to the Señor Commandant-general, reporting to him what has occurred with respect to this matter, and let this original document remain in the keeping of the agent for the preservation of the item which he has furnished. DOMINGO CAVELLO.

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243. RECEIPT BY DON ATAÑASIO DEMECIERES
OCTOBER 29, 1779[596]

I have received of the sub-agent of this royal presidio the four hundred fifty pesos mentioned in the foregoing decree, and in testimony thereof I sign this in this royal presidio of San Antonio de Bejar, October 29, 1779.

ATANASIO DEMECIERES.

[Endorsement[596a]] I certify that these are copies of the *oficio* of the governor of the Province of Texas Col. Don Domingo Cavello and the letter of Lt.-Col. Don Atanasio Demecieres which he enclosed. Arispe, May 23, 1780. ANTONIO BONILLA.

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[596] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 101.

[596a] This certificate applies to *Documents* 239, 242, and 243.

244. RECORD OF THE BURIAL OF DE MEZIERES[396] NOVEMBER 3, 1779[397]

Don Athanaçio de Micieres, Knight of the Order of St. Louis, Commander of the Post of Natchitoches, Province of Luiciana, widower by second marriage
Burial fee five dollars

In the parochial church of the villa of San Fernando and the royal presidio of San Antonio de Vexar, province of Texas, on the third day of the month of November, 1779 ,I, the undersigned parish priest, gave ecclesiastical burial to Lieutenant-colonel Don Athanacio de Micieres, knight of the Order of St. Louis, commander of the post of Natchitoches, province of La Luciana, widower by second marriage with Doña Pelagia Fazentes. He received the sacrament of penitence, the viaticum, and extreme unction. He died on the second day of said month, making his will by proxy. His burial fee was five dollars. In witness whereof, I signed this entry.

BACHELOR PEDRO FUENTES Y FERNANDEZ [rubric].

245. CABELLO TO CROIX, NOVEMBER 4, 1779[398]

[COPY NO. 2] DISPATCH OF THE GOVERNOR OF TEXAS to the Commandant-general.

My dear Sir: The legalized copy, authenticated by me, which I enclose to your Lordship, will inform you of the despatch sent me by the Lieutenant-colonel Don Atanasio Demecieres, asking that I should furnish him four hundred fifty pesos to supply the troops of the detachment of militia of the villa of Nachitoches which had escorted him from that villa to this presidio, in order that they might provide themselves with the things necessary for returning to that place. And, although I have no orders from your Lordship to contribute such aid, yet, considering the injuries which would be caused to this troop if it had to await here your Lordship's reply, and in the belief that you would not disapprove it, I decided to provide this supplement, on the terms which you will see in my decree. I trust, therefore, that your Lordship will make such disposition as may best please you.

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[396] This entry was transcribed for the editor on Nov. 11, 1911, by Miss Adina de Zavala, of San Antonio.

[397] Archive of the Diocese of San Antonio, *Libro de Entierros de la Yglesia Parroquial de la Villa de San Fernando y Presidio de San Antonio de Bejar, partida 704.*

[398] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 99.

Because of the return of this picket to its destination, I have reported it to the chevalier governor of the province of Luisiana, Colonel Don Bernardo de Galvez, inclosing a duplicate of the same document which I send with this to your Lordship, and one of the [list of] effects which the said lieutenant-colonel delivered to me and which I communicated to your Lordship in my despatch number 139, together with the muster roll which I made of the troop on the day of its entry into this presidio and on that of its departure for its post. In this roll it is noted that Julian Rondien and Francisco Augues are remaining in this place, for the reasons which I made known to your Lordship in my despatch number 141. All of this it has seemed proper to report to the cavalier governor, for what it may be worth, for which purpose I likewise make it known to your Lordship, hoping that it may merit your approval.

May God guard your Lordship many years. Bejar, November 4, 1779.

The hand of your Lordship is kissed by your most attentive and faithful servant. DOMINGO CABELLO.

Señor Commandant-general Cavallero de Croix.

246. ATHANASE DE MEZIERES JR.[399] TO MATIAS DE GALVEZ, DECEMBER 16, 1779[400]

Natchitoches, Dec. 16, 1779.

SIR: God has just afflicted us with the greatest of misfortunes in the cruel loss, which we suffer, of the most tender of all fathers. The kindness which you have always shown him has caused me to hope that you will accord us its continuation. Do not refuse me this favor, sir, nor that of believing me with profound respect, your very humble and obedient servant.

AZE. DE MEZIERES [rubric].

Monsieur de Galvez.

247. BORME[401] TO BERNARDO DE GALVEZ DECEMBER 29, 1779[402]

MONSEIGNEUR: I hereby report to your Excellency the return of the detachment of mounted militia which went as escort to M. Demezieres to St. Antoine, and of which I enclose an accurate list. This detachment has been reported to me and the account rendered to me through M. Dortolant, sub-lieutenant. M. Antoine de Mezieres, lieutenant of that company, having returned, has found it beneath him to present himself to me. In view of the circumstances I have not wished to tell him to do anything. By the list which I have the honor to address to your Excellency on the subject of the detachment of cavalry, you will see the sum which he has received on account of the payment which M. Demezieres had promised them. I inform your Excellency of it in order that you may have the kindness to protect these militiamen with respect to the payment.

---

[399] The son of Athanase de Mézières.

[400] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 192, no. 167.

[401] Bormé succeeded De Mézières as lieutenant-governor at Natchitoches.

[402] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 192, no. 168.

I am with greatest respect, Monseigneur, your very humble and very obedient servant. BORME [rubric]. Natchitoches, Dec. 29, 1779.

248. BORME TO BERNARDO DE GALVEZ
DECEMBER 29, 1779[403]

MONSEIGNEUR: I am reporting to your Excellency the death of M. De Mezieres which occurred at San Antonio on November 2. Sr. Armant brought a package addressed to your Excellency, directed by the royal service, which I to-day sent to a militiaman, Pierre Foret, directed by me to M. Declouët,[404] in order that it may reach you as soon as possible.

I am with great respect, Monseigneur, your very humble and obedient servant. Natchitoches, Dec. 29, 1779. BORME [rubric].
Monseigneur Bernardo de Galvez.

249. BORME TO BERNARDO DE GALVEZ
DECEMBER 29, 1779[405]

MONSEIGNEUR: M. De Mezieres having died at St. Antonio, and the cross of St. Louis with which he was decorated having been sent back to me, I am sending it herewith to your Excellency, as you see.

I am with profound respect, Monseigneur, your very humble and obedient servant. Natchitoches, Dec. 29, 1779. BORME [rubric].
Monseigneur Don Bernardo de Galvez.

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[403] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 192, no. 169.

[404] Commander at Opelousas.

[405] Pap. Proc. de Cuba, leg. 192, no. 170.

250. CROIX TO THE VICEROY, JANUARY 26, 1780[406]

[NUMBER 3[407]] MOST EXCELLENT SIR,

My dear Sir: In virtue of the royal orders of his Majesty communicated to this government and to that of Luisiana by the most excellent Señor Don Josef de Galvez, the Lieutenant-colonel Don Atanasio Demecieres, commandant of the fort of Natchitoches, who has died a natural death at San Antonio de Bejar, was commissioned to visit the nations of Indians which live north of the province of Texas and reconnoiter their lands.

In order to enable him to fulfill his commission, the Señor Governor of Luisiana provided that he should be given an escort of militia and a list of effects destined for gifts for the Indians.

These aids, as your Excellency will see from the accompanying copy and original documents, have amounted to one thousand, one hundred eighty-two reals, silver, which quantity, supplied by the royal chests of New Orleans, I beg your Excellency to deign to order reimbursed with the sending of the first allowance [*situado*], whilst I report this expense to his Majesty and solicit his royal approval, as well as the expense of four hundred fifty pesos which the governor of Texas, Don Domingo Cavello, supplied for the return of the detachment of militia to Nachitoches. I hope that your Excellency will provide for their payment, by the royal officials of San Luis Potosi, to the agent of the presidio of San Antonio de Bejar, Don Bernardo Fernandez.

May our Lord preserve your Excellency many years. Arispe, January 26, 1780.

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[406] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 103.

[407] Enclosure with number 252.

Most excellent Sir, the hand of your Excellency is kissed by your most attentive and faithful servant.

El Cavallero de Croix.

Most excellent Señor Martin de Mayorga.

---

251. CROIX TO BERNARDO DE GALVEZ JANUARY 26, 1780[408]

Arispe, Jan. 26, 1780.

My esteemed Friend: I envy you, with friendship and honor, for the happiness and satisfaction which your valor, zeal, and talent have won for you in that position, with glory to the arms of the king, advantage to his loyal subjects, and hopes that they may increase through putting an end to their pernicious proximity of the English. I, my friend, am sowing in barren soil, and if it produces me any fruit, it is among many thorns, and at the cost of infinite anxiety and fatigue, which unusually fail of their object in the enormous distances of these regions.

I have been seriously ill since April of the past year, without use of arms and hands, and obliged to sign with a stamp. But as soon as I saw that I was convalescing I abandoned Chihuahua, everybody thinking that I should not reach Arispe alive. But I am still alive, enjoying good health, have recovered strength, and trust in God that I shall regain it completely in the coming spring; for the climate is suitable, very healthful and mild.

I have been grieved by the death of De Mecieres. I, like your Grace, was planning to secure for this officer the promotion and favors which he merits, and I realize how much I shall miss him unless you replace him in Natchitoches with another of equal qualities—and those of the deceased were very excellent.

---

[408] Bancroft Coll., Louisiana.

He made himself loved and respected by the Nations of the North; and these are the ones who play the principal rôle in my plans, for their friendship alarmed the Apaches and their campaigns have filled them with consternation, causing them to realize their critical situation between two fires from which they cannot emerge unhurt if they close in on them.

I have orders from the court to desist from the undertaking which I proposed, and I am glad of it, because of the difficulties which I meet on all hands; because of that of arranging, for some years to come, these troops, who are capable only of attending to their own preservation and the custody of the horse herds; because I consider remote the hope of embracing you; and because I regard as more safe and advantageous the Christian maxims of his Majesty, which I humbly obey, and which have caused me to change my ideas. Of this change I will inform you when there is time to make and send a copy of my new proposals, whose fundamental aim is always to maintain peace with the Indians of the North and to induce them to continue their incursions upon the rancherías of the Lipanes.

I officially inform you of the gratification which I assigned to Demesieres and which I have ordered delivered to his heirs.[409] I am confident that the king in his charity will grant a pension to the daughters; and if the boys are given positions as officers in these presidios or in any other place depending upon my nomination or will, I shall take great pleasure in showing my good will.

I should like to hear from you often, but we are very far apart, and the despatch of letters by land is difficult. Nevertheless, however distant, I love you with all my heart. Your affectionate friend, CROIX [rubric].

---

[409] Feminine.

[Postscript] Command and you will be obeyed with pleasure. Here everyone thinks only of personal interest, and little of the king or of virtue. Do not think it strange that I do not write you in my own hand, for I assure you that I lack time for anything except to spend my natural ardor in improving somewhat the sad condition of all the provinces in my command; and I shall be glad, if in a few years our master should will it that you should be my successor, to have succeeded in putting you in a position to work with less anguish and with greater progress. Their perfect disposition will be a matter of time, but, this having been effected, I think the king will have no greater riches in any part of this America. I will write no more at present for the above reason, and because it injures my health to see and to contemplate what little progress is made for lack of zealous hands, and for many other reasons which you will understand, without it being necessary to tell you. But I hope the king will be pleased that I should take another position, for every day I am more aware that uprightness and mildness does not avail with the men raised in these regions and that only the greatest severity would enable my successors to secure obedience from those under their orders.

This is the first position which I have held, and in consequence neither the court nor the public know me, and, besides, the time is unpropitious. You may believe that I cannot do more than this, which will not be little, unless I end my days in this position. I am sorry that I cannot regard matters with indifference. Goodbye. Take care of your health, and love your friend.

CROIX [rubric].

252. CROIX TO JOSE DE GALVEZ, MAY 23, 1780[410]

No. 522. The Commandant-general of the Interior Provinces of New Spain reports the expenses incurred by the deceased Lieutenant-colonel Don Atanacio de Mesieres in the fulfillment of his commissions

MOST EXCELLENT SIR — MY DEAR SIR: The accompanying copies of letters and documents of the governors of Luisiana and Texas, Don Bernardo de Galvez and Don Domingo Cavello,[410a] attest the necessary expenses caused by the commissions conferred by me upon the late Lieutenant-colonel Don Atanacio Demesieres, in making presents to the friendly Indians of the North and for the salaries and stipends[411] of the officers and soldiers of the militia of Natchitoches who escorted him in his reconnoiterings and expeditions to San Antonio de Vexar.

The total amount of these expenses was 1847 pesos, 6 reals, 7 maravedis. Of this amount 1397 pesos, 6 reals, 17 maravedis were supplied by the royal treasury of Luisiana, and the remaining 450 pesos by the agent of the presidio of San Antonio de Vejar, by virtue of the orders of the respective governors.

With a view to the reimbursement of both sums, I sent to the viceroy of New Spain the official communication of which enclosure[412] number 3 is a copy; and as he has consented to my request, I report the whole matter to your Excellency in order that you may make it known to his Majesty and inform me if it merits his royal approval.

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[410] *Prov. Int.*, vol. 182, f. 93.

[410a] Numbers 242, 243, 245.

[411] *Pre*, or *prest*. The stipend of soldiers. French *pret*. Latin *Aes militis, stipendium*. In the royal ordinance of 1765 relative to the graduation of troops the word *prest* is used. *Diccionario Castellano* by P. Esteban de Terreros y Prado (1788), vol. iii.

[412] The reference is to *Document* 250.

May our Lord preserve your Excellency many years. Arispe, May 23, 1780.

Most excellent Sir, the hand of your Excellency is kissed by your most attentive and faithful servant,

El Cavallero de Croix [rubric].

Most excellent Señor Don Joseph de Galvez. Duplicate.

ERRATA IN VOLUME I

Page 44: The visits of St. Denis in 1700 to the Yatasí, Natchitoches, and Cadodacho, were parts of the same expedition, not of two different ones, as is implied.

Page 58, line 16: for *Bourgemont* read *Bourgmont.*

Page 84, lines 4-5: omit *de Nueveville.*

Page 90, line 16: for *Matthas* read *Mathías.*

Page 250: De Blanc, referred to in the footnote is not the same as Le Blanc, referred to in the text. Here and on page 84 LeBlanc and De Blanc are confused.

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